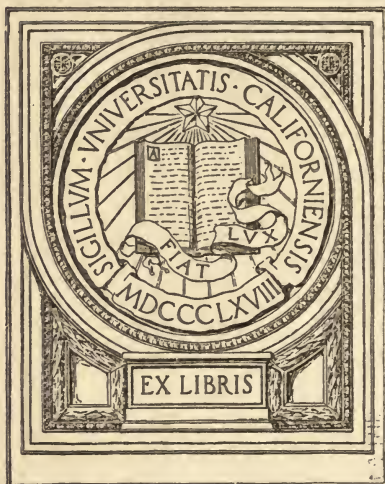






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THE  
HISTORY OF PARAGUAY,

WITH  
*Notes of Personal Observations,*

AND  
REMINISCENCES OF DIPLOMACY UNDER  
DIFFICULTIES.

BY  
CHARLES A. WASHBURN,  
COMMISSIONER AND MINISTER RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AT ASUNCION  
FROM 1861 TO 1868.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

BOSTON:  
LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK:  
LEE, SHEPARD, AND DILLINGHAM.

1871.

65131



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IN commencing this work a strange story was promised to the reader. However imperfectly it has been told, I believe the promise has thus far been fulfilled. But the strangest and darkest part is yet to come, and, to give anything like a full and connected narrative of the closing acts of the long tragedy, the work must be made up to a large extent of personal reminiscences. Therefore no apology is made for the free use of the first person, or for the introduction of those matters personal to myself which are necessary to a full narrative of the events as they occurred. For any value that this work may have, I must depend from this time to the conclusion on my testimony as a witness, rather than on any arrangement or collocation of evidence gathered from other sources, and which is open to others. I prefer to incur the risk of being charged with egotism, and with giving my own affairs an undue prominence, rather than to weaken the narrative by any circumlocution or affected modesty. I was so situated and compelled to take so prominent a part in the events which I have to relate, that without vanity I may quote as applicable to myself the familiar words of Æneas: —

“Quæque ipse miserrima vidi,  
Et quorum pars magna fui.”



Having resided for several years in Paraguay previous to the war, I became familiar with the habits and character of the people. I had seen, that, from causes which I have already traced, a race had been developed in which the last spark of personal liberty had been extinguished, and which knew no exceptions to the rule of implicit, unquestioning obedience to constituted authority. A whole nation thus helpless and incapable of self-assertion I had seen led by a despotic ruler into an unnecessary war, which was only to end when the Paraguayans as a people should no longer exist. More than this, I had seen that when the author of these calamities was about to be overtaken by the consequences of his own folly and ambition, he had endeavored to be revenged on mankind by destroying every human being that was in his power, and, under Providence, I had been the means of thwarting his plans to such an extent that some persons escaped, who were capable of bearing witness to his enormities. I had been destined by him for the fate that he intended for all, and his conduct towards me had shown such a combination of every bad quality in the same individual, such depravity and low cunning, such delight in cruelty, such effrontery in falsehood, that without a plain and succinct narrative of events as they occurred no one would believe nature capable of producing a character so depraved. I had seen many of my best friends seized and carried off to be starved, tortured, and executed for no crime whatever, and an attempt made to blast their names, after they were dead, by false accusations. It is my duty, therefore, to vindicate them, and in doing so to expose, not only the character of their destroyer, but the infamy of his apologists and abettors. Lopez, the cause of all this sacrifice and misery, has gone to his final account, his soul stained with the blood of seven hundred thousand of his own people, the victims of his ambition and cruelty. His defenders, who, knowing his character, encouraged him to prolong the hopeless contest, and who shared, and still hold, the spoils of his murdered victims, should have their names pilloried in history, that in



after times, when the world shall wonder how such a wretch was ever permitted to live, they shall be condemned to share his execrable immortality.

Such a calamity as the destruction of a nation and the extermination of an entire race should not be allowed to pass unnoticed into oblivion. There survive but few witnesses who can or will make public what they know of the long tragedy; and perhaps none but myself will ever attempt to publish the story of what they have seen, heard, and suffered. Of these few who escaped, nearly all were either in prison for a long time, or kept under such surveillance around the army head-quarters that they knew little of what was transpiring in the country except what passed under their own eyes. My means of observation were also very imperfect, owing to the constant efforts of Lopez to prevent communication between his camp and the capital, and to the inextricable mystery in which I found myself involved. I can, however, give my own experience, and in time, perhaps, some one else may be able to produce a connected narrative from the various fragmentary statements of the different witnesses.

Soon after the seizure of the Marques de Olinda, and while the question whether or not the Brazilian Minister, Cesar Sauvan Vianna de Lima, would be permitted to leave the country was still in doubt, I received from the Department of State the leave of absence which I had asked for some months before. I said nothing of this, however, until after my unfortunate colleague was safely out of the country, and the steamer which was sent to carry him away had returned to Paraguay. I knew that if I asked for passports to leave immediately after I had secured the safety of the Brazilian Minister, and before the steamer that carried him away had returned, that Lopez would suspect there was collusion between us, — that we had played him a trick, and that his steamer would be seized as a prize of war by the first Brazilian gunboat it might encounter; and also that other vessels in the river destined for Paraguay with valuable cargoes, composed largely



of munitions of war, would likewise be captured. I therefore remained quiet until I found that all the pledges given by Vianna de Lima had been faithfully respected by his government. About a week, however, after the return of the Parana, and while waiting to learn if all the other vessels had arrived unmolested, I took occasion to visit the President. Alas, how had I fallen from grace! Instead of the bland and courteous manner which he had always before assumed in private interviews, he had a dark and forbidding scowl, and his eyes had a sort of liquid, inflamed, fiendish look such as I had never before seen in the head of a human being, — I have seen something like it in wild beasts that have been goaded to madness by their tormentors, — and his whole appearance at that time gave me an impression of his character which has since been fearfully confirmed by his acts. My ostensible business with him at that time was to bring to his attention the project of the Collins Telegraph Company to extend their lines to all the principal towns and cities of South America. He heard my statement of the project, answered scarcely a word, and as soon as I had concluded broke forth in a furious tirade in regard to the officious part I had taken in behalf of the Brazilian Minister. I reminded him, that, if he had any complaints to make against me for the part I had taken, the proper way for them to be made would be officially through the Minister for Foreign Affairs. No, he abruptly said, he did not wish the correspondence reopened, but he wanted to express his opinions to me verbally. He said that I had already gone out of my way, exceeded my duties as the minister of a neutral nation, and shown myself to be no friend to Paraguay. I had taken advantage of the interview he had *condescended* to grant me, and brought into my official notes that which he had not spoken as official or binding, but as mere suggestions to be followed out or not, as might afterwards suit his purposes. But, not satisfied with this, I had in the correspondence made use of several sharp and objectionable phrases. I replied I had only followed the strict but plain line of duty; and that no stranger, no neutral



or impartial person who was familiar with the English language, could find anything to object to either in the course I had pursued or the language I had employed. To this he replied, striking his breast in a theatrical manner: "It matters not what other people and other nations may say or think of the matter; it is what I say. I am to decide these questions." I then turned upon him and said, that, in my opinion, I had most reason to complain. Though I had come in as the friend of both parties to arrange a troublesome question, and had endeavored to so manage it that no Paraguayan interest could in any way be prejudiced, yet I had been treated all through with distrust and suspicion; the most commonplace expressions and sentences had been carped at and complained of; and throughout I had been regarded as an enemy trying to overreach the Paraguayan government. After several more passages not distinguished for amiability, I took my leave, unable to conceive how I had given such terrible offence. Could it be because the Brazilian Minister had escaped from his hands?

But the cause of his perturbation was soon apparent. Thinking that he had displayed wonderful astuteness and statesmanship in the correspondence between his minister and myself, he published it in the *Semanario*. In the same number he had a fulsome editorial in praise of himself, — of course written at his own dictation, — for his great magnanimity, courtesy, and strict observance of the laws of nations. When the *Semanario*, however, containing this correspondence reached Buenos Aires, the newspapers there did not at all concur with him in their estimate of his conduct or his sagacity as displayed in the letters of his minister. On the contrary, they uniformly condemned his mode of beginning the war and the detention of the Minister as being the acts of a semi-savage. They accused him of an intention to keep Vianna de Lima as a prisoner in Paraguay, and said he had only been bullied out of it by fear of the United States. But whatever was the cause of his anger with me, I resolved that, as soon as circumstances would permit, I would avail



myself of my leave of absence, and ask my passports, and that I would see him no more before my departure.

I was soon forced, however, to abandon the idea that I would not again see the man on whose will depended the life and death of every man in the country. The Brazilian consul, Señor Amarro José dos Santos Barboza, came to me a few days after in great affliction and excitement, telling me that all the passengers and crew of the Marques de Olinda, who since her capture had been kept as close prisoners in the government barracks, were to be sent away into the interior of the country, where he feared they would be exposed to severe hardships. He begged me to go and see the President, and request that they might be allowed to live in his house as prisoners, giving their parole not to leave it or go outside except with permission. I told the consul that the President had, in my last interview with him, shown himself to be so angry with me for the part I had already taken in behalf of his countrymen, it was very doubtful whether any further interference on my part would not do more harm than good. He begged me, however, to go; and I was obliged to dissemble the resentment I felt at the President's rudeness on the last occasion, and make the intercession.

To my surprise his Excellency was now all smiles and *condescension*. I told him I had come at the instance of the Brazilian consul, Amarro Barboza, to request that the passengers and crew of the Marques de Olinda might be permitted to *live* in his house, — giving their parole not to leave it, — and not be sent into the interior. But I added, as my own suggestion, that it would be far better for him and for Paraguay that he should allow them to leave the country altogether; that if they were kept as prisoners, Brazil would be obliged to make war to the bitter end. She could not, and would not, treat for peace if they were detained. The taking of the steamer was an affair that might be peaceably adjudicated, but not so the detention of her passengers and crew. But he did not see it in the same light. He said they would not be allowed to depart until the final settlement of all the questions at issue.



But he added, that, as they did not enter the country as enemies, they would not be treated as such. They would be sent into the interior to the district of San Joaquin, some thirty leagues from the capital, where, if they kept quiet, they would be allowed to live without molestation; they might hunt, or ride, or divert themselves in any way that they saw fit. He said, moreover, that in carrying on war he should conduct it in a way that would put to shame all his neighbors; that he knew the warfare of South America had always been barbarous, savage, and sanguinary. But he was resolved to put to shame the practice of killing and maltreating prisoners, and should strictly observe and be bound by the rules of war as held and practised by the most civilized nations. He was to be the pink of South American chivalry, the Chevalier Bayard of modern times. Prisoners should not only be protected in their lives, but should have good treatment. The gaucho system of robbing, sacking, and cutting throats would be entirely prohibited in his army; and whatever might be the result, the world should say that Francisco Solano Lopez conducted his military operations on principles humane and honorable. I expressed my gratification at this, and told him that, following this course, he would have a great name in history, and that adherence to the practice would of itself entitle him to the respect of all foreign nations; that most of the military leaders of South America, it was well known, had so tarnished their names with cruelties practised on prisoners that the character of the Spanish American people was generally regarded as sanguinary and semi-savage, and that by pursuing a course marked by humanity and justice towards his enemies he might acquire an illustrious name. He smiled approvingly, and said that he was resolved upon it. True, I had some doubts whether he would do all that he had promised, as I had never seen him practise either magnanimity or justice towards any one who had offended him; nevertheless, if encouraged to that course, he might treat his prisoners better than he otherwise would.

I now told him that I had received leave of absence from



my post several weeks previously, and had only deferred my departure till all questions were settled growing out of the departure of Vianna de Lima. He expressed regret that I should go away just then, as there would be important negotiations to arrange within a short time. The war would be over in three or four months at the furthest, and, as foreign ministers might be called in to arrange the terms of peace, it would be well that there might be one of them, at least, who had lived in Paraguay and was familiar with the character and condition of the people, and not unduly prejudiced in favor of their enemies. He seemed to think that all the representatives of foreign governments in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Rio Janeiro were entirely enlisted in favor of Brazil, and that Mr. Thornton, the English Minister, had a feeling of strong enmity to him. I told him that probably I should return long before the first step would be taken by any party looking towards peace. I should very likely be back in six months, and in that time Brazil would not be ready to begin the war. A government having so vast a territory as Brazil, with a sparsely settled population, could not in less than ten or twelve months collect, arm, and discipline a force that it would venture near the large and well-drilled army of Paraguay. Beside, it must create a navy, and this would take a year at least. In my opinion, Brazil would begin the war with the determination of conquering Paraguay, if not destroying it as an independent nation.

This reasoning of mine the President thought preposterous. Brazil would be glad enough to treat whenever it suited him to listen to her proposals, and he was not disposed to prolong the war needlessly, or for any selfish or ambitious purpose. But the interests of Paraguay required that she should show to the world that she had sufficient strength and material resources to command respect. I told him we would see who was right and who was wrong; to which, with some asperity, he responded: "Yes, we shall see; *si, veremos.*"

The war had indeed commenced before this interview with active operations against the province of Matto Grosso. The



people in that remote district had no knowledge of what had been transpiring elsewhere for the last two months. Their sole dependence for information from abroad was the packet steamer *Marques de Olinda*. They knew she had not arrived when due, yet her delay might be accounted for in so many ways that it occasioned no alarm. But while they had been awaiting the packet's arrival, Lopez was preparing a surprise for them. He had taken five of his best steamers with two gunboats in tow, each with a sixty-eight-pounder on board. On each of the steamers he had placed several cannon of lighter calibre, but adapted to the size of the vessels. Some five thousand of the best troops were then taken on board, and the expedition, under command of General Vicente Barrios, brother-in-law of the President, on the 14th of December started on her voyage of conquest. On the 26th the expedition came in sight of Fort Coimbra, situate on the right bank of the river, nearly two hundred leagues from Asuncion, and twenty from the frontiers claimed by Paraguay. This fort was considered to be very strong, and so it would have been in the hands of any other people than the Brazilians. Barrios sent a summons to the commander to surrender. The reply sent back was of a character to indicate that the fort would never be surrendered while there was a man left to defend it. Barrios then began to bombard with his sixty-eight-pounders, which, being of much heavier calibre and longer range than any guns of the fort, could have easily silenced them without the loss of a man. He, however, made an assault that was repulsed with much loss, and the next day sent a detachment to occupy an eminence that commanded the fort. The next night the fort was evacuated, and the force, consisting of less than two hundred men, left on the little steamer *Anhambay*, that was lying just above and out of range of the guns of the Paraguayans. When the latter entered the fort, they found an immense quantity of ammunition, including powder enough to last the whole Paraguayan army for at least a year of active war. The cannon, thirty-seven in number, were all taken, and a Brazilian flag and two of



the steamers were despatched below to give an account of the great victory achieved by five thousand men over two hundred. On their arrival at Asuncion some three hundred people paraded through the streets, bearing the captured flag, and shouting vivas to the great Lopez and his army of heroes. Among the shouts, however, were mingled other cries, like "Death to the Brazilians!" "Death to the Porteños!"

The expedition, after the capture of Coimbra, moved on to Alberquerque, a small settlement a few leagues above. This place was taken without resistance, and the party went on to Corumbá, the principal town in that part of Brazil, though containing only about two thousand inhabitants. The news of the taking of Coimbra had already reached there when the expedition arrived to find the town abandoned. The inhabitants had fled, with the exception of a few foreigners. The town was sacked, the foreigners were carried prisoners to Asuncion, and several Brazilians who fell into the hands of the Paraguayans were pierced to death with lances on the allegation that they were spies. The ears of many of the slain were cut off and carried as trophies to Asuncion; and of the prisoners taken, not one ever left Paraguay alive. In fact, the whole conduct of the Paraguayans, in regard to the lives and property of the unhappy people who had been surprised by them, was entirely contrary to what President Lopez had told me with great complacency it would be a day or two before.

A few days after the departure of the expedition from Asuncion, a little English steamer, the *Ranger*, reached Paraguay, bound for Matto Grosso. As the government had announced, in commencing the war, that the navigation of the river would be left free to all nations except Brazil, it was allowed, after several days' detention, and a search and scrutiny that left no piece of merchandise untouched, to proceed to its destination. It returned to Asuncion soon after, and on the 16th of January, 1865, I availed myself of the kindness of its commander, Captain Harrison, to take my departure from Paraguay.

I was doubting in my own mind whether I should ever



return ; but were I to come back at all, I supposed I should not be absent for more than six or seven months. Unforeseen events, however, determined me to go again to South America ; but instead of reaching my post in the course of six or eight weeks after leaving the United States, it was, owing to circumstances that will be fully related hereafter, fourteen months after leaving New York before I again set foot in Paraguay.



## CHAPTER II.

Buenos Aires declines an Alliance with Brazil. — Seizure of Two Argentine War Steamers. — Don Ramon Capdevila. — Siege of Paisandu. — Death of Leandro Gomez. — Spanish American Ideas of National Honor and National Neutrality. — Capitulation of Montevideo. — The Oriental Legation in Paraguay. — Correspondence between Lopez and Urquiza. — Colonel Coriolano Marquez. — Capture of Corrientes by General Robles. — Provisional Government established. — Excitement in Buenos Aires. — Speech of President Mitre. — The Triple Alliance. — The Campaign in Corrientes. — Duplicity of Urquiza. — Colonel George Thompson.

FROM the time of the seizure of the Marques de Olinda, in October, 1864, until the meeting of the Congress in the following March, scarcely any communication had been allowed between Paraguay and the country below, and after the Congress met it was strictly and jealously prohibited.

The project of a sudden invasion of Corrientes had been discussed in the Congress ; and as the member who proposed it, Don Andres Gill, was known to have intimate relations with Lopez, it was understood that this would be one of the first acts of hostility after war had been declared. It was not anticipated, however, by any one in Buenos Aires, nor in Corrientes, that Lopez, having commenced war with Brazil in a manner that would call forth all the resources of the Empire to attack him, would also provoke the hostility of the Argentines. If there was to be war between the two countries, the true policy of the Argentine Republic was to remain at peace ; and as the troops and munitions of war must nearly all be conveyed by way of the river, it was supposed that a rich harvest would be reaped by the merchants of Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and the ports upon the river, at the expense of the belligerents. The Brazilian government was very desirous to engage the Argentine Republic to make common



cause with it against Lopez. Councillor Paranhos was sent specially from Rio de Janeiro to Buenos Aires to effect, if possible, an alliance between the two powers. He foreseeing that in a war carried on between his country and Paraguay it would be very difficult to send all the troops and supplies by way of the river to attack Paraguay, and that it was of the first importance to have a base on Argentine territory, endeavored to draw President Mitre into an alliance with the Emperor. He desired the moral support of the Argentine Republic in the war, and was ready to stipulate that all the expense, both in men and money, should be borne by Brazil. Mitre, however, refused to listen to any such proposition; he said the policy of his country was peace, and peace he would maintain if possible. The attitude taken by President Mitre at this time was almost universally approved by the Argentine people. Though they generally regarded Lopez as a common enemy of civilization and progress, the hereditary prejudice and antipathy against the Brazilians was such that they did not wish to make an alliance with them even against a semi-savage. The mission of Paranhos, therefore, was a complete failure, and he returned to Rio de Janeiro, where, soon after, the unexpected but grateful news came to the ears of the distinguished envoy, that on the 13th of April, 1865, Lopez had, without any previous warning to the Argentine government, sent a fleet of his steamers down the river to Corrientes, and there seized two Argentine war steamers, killed many of their crews, captured the rest, and, taking the vessels in tow, returned to Paraguay.

The capture of these vessels was attended by circumstances of greater audacity and barbarity than had been the seizure of the Marques de Olinda. It was about seven o'clock in the morning; all was peace and quiet on the river and in the town of Corrientes, and no one was expecting danger from any quarter, when steamers bearing the Paraguayan flag were seen approaching from up the river. As they came down past the town the flags of the Argentine vessels were dipped in courtesy to them, after which they came round and inside



of the Argentine vessels, whose officers so little suspected any hostile intent on their part, that the crews were not diverted from their occupations, but at the moment were taking their morning coffee in the cabin. As the Paraguayan vessels arrived alongside of the Argentines, a large number of soldiers sprang on deck, and began firing upon all who were in sight. Surprised and confounded at the suddenness of this attack, several of the crew jumped overboard and attempted to swim ashore. Few of them, however, were successful, as the Paraguayans shot at them while in the water, and scarcely any succeeded in reaching the bank and escaping. The steamers as soon as possible were taken in tow, and all who remained on board were made prisoners and carried to Paraguay, where they were placed in a common prison and made to work in fetters upon the streets. They were most miserably fed, and soon contracted diseases from which several died, and more would have done so but for the kindness and care  
× with which they were attended to by Don Ramon Capdevila, an Argentine gentleman who had long lived in Paraguay, and who for a time ministered to their wants, trusting that when the war should be over his own government would recompense him for any outlay he might be at on their account. His interest in these unfortunate people and his kindness towards them were, however, construed by Lopez as evincing disapproval of his acts and sympathy with his own country and people. For this he was arrested, thrown into prison, and loaded with fetters, and his fellow-countrymen were left to the bare prison fare and treatment, under which some died and others lingered on until Lopez thought it more convenient to execute them than to keep them any longer. It is perhaps needless to say that Capdevila, after prolonged torture of years, and for no other offence, so far as is known, except that of feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, was finally executed; and his wife, an accomplished Argentine lady, and four young children were driven into the Cordilleras, and exposed to hardships that can scarcely be imagined, much less described.



While Lopez, during the year 1864 and the beginning of 1865, had been engaged in recruiting his army, and forcing all who were not in the ranks to pledge to him their lives and fortunes, to make it appear to the world that he was sustained by the whole Paraguayan people, events were transpiring in the Banda Oriental such as he had not anticipated, and which effectually deranged his plans. The Brazilians, in accordance with a threat that had been made by Saraiva to occupy Oriental territory in case the exorbitant demands of his government were not immediately complied with, had sent a large force into Uruguay, that united with Flores and captured the important town of Salto, on the Uruguay, on the 28th of November, and early in December commenced the siege of Paisandu, a town of some five thousand inhabitants. The land forces were supported by the Brazilian squadron, that at the same time commenced the bombardment from the river. The military operations, both by land and water, were doubtless directed by the Brazilian envoy, Paranhos, who had arrived but a short time before at Buenos Aires, clothed with almost viceregal amplitude of authority to conduct the war against Uruguay and to negotiate with the Argentine government. As yet, however, he could make no impression on President Mitre, who still refused to be drawn into a war against Paraguay, notwithstanding that, without having declared war against the Oriental Republic, he had rendered every assistance in his power to the Brazilians towards overthrowing the legal and established government of that country. Paisandu was defended nearly the whole month of December by a small garrison of about six hundred men, under the command of General Leandro Gomez and General Lucas Piriz. It was defended with a bravery and endurance that have never been excelled, and seldom equalled, in modern warfare. The gallantry with which this little band sustained for so long a time the attack of forces so many times outnumbering their own must render this siege one of the most memorable in South American history. The long resistance was stimulated by the vain hope of succor from Paraguay, as,



misled by the vague promises of Lopez to come to the rescue of the imperilled Banda Oriental, the press of Montevideo had been constantly announcing for several weeks that a strong Paraguayan force was advancing through the Misiones to the Oriental frontier. But no amount of gallantry can long prevail against overwhelming odds, and on the 2d of January, 1865, the town of Paisandu was stormed and taken, after a great part of the defenders, including General Piriz, had perished. General Leandro Gomez, when he saw that the Brazilians, with Flores and his gauchos, had got inside the town, realized that further resistance would be useless. He had just gone to his room to write a note, offering to capitulate, when it was entered by the Brazilian troops, and he surrendered himself and his staff as prisoners of war. Immediately after a small body of Flores's men, under the command of one Goyo Suarez, entered the apartment, and insisted that the distinguished prisoner should be delivered into their care, inasmuch as being an Oriental he ought properly to be regarded as the prisoner of the Oriental troops. Gomez, when he heard this demand, requested that it might be granted, stating that he could have no objection to delivering himself to his own countrymen. Suarez had no sooner got possession of the dreaded and gallant general whose bravery and skill had already rendered the siege famous throughout the country, than he ordered him to be conducted into an adjoining yard and summarily executed. His remains were then most shamefully mutilated, the body dragged out by a rope and cast ignominiously into a pit along with hundreds of his fellow-victims. This shameful murder of a man whose valor had been so distinguished as to cause the Oriental name to be honored by both Brazilians and Argentines caused a general outburst of disgust and indignation from all persons not blind to every sense of honor and good faith. To the credit of the Brazilians it should be said that they disclaimed all responsibility for the act, and denounced it as one that must naturally reflect on the cause which they had espoused. On the other hand, it should be said that there were some,



and not a few nor the most ignorant, who justified and defended the act on the ground that by killing Gomez they had done an irreparable injury to his party, as one general like him was worth ten thousand ordinary troops to his cause. It could have better spared ten thousand of its best troops than one general so valiant and tireless.

One other incident connected with this siege should be noted, as it shows how little of good faith and common honesty was observed by the Emperor of Brazil and President Mitre in their warfare upon the Oriental Republic. The Argentine government at the time of this siege still professed neutrality in the Oriental difficulties, and yet the bombs which were used by the Brazilian squadron in the bombardment of Paisandu had been furnished by President Mitre from the armories of Buenos Aires. Such are Spanish American ideas of national honor and national neutrality. ✓

Paisandu having fallen, the combined forces of Brazil and Flores laid close siege to Montevideo, after conceding seven days for the neutral portion of the population to retire. On the 15th of February, the term of office of President Aguierre expired, and the President of the Senate, Don Tomas Villalba, took the vacant post. Some of the more ardent members of the government, like Carreras and others, were disposed to resist until Montevideo should be levelled like Paisandu, but Villalba was not prepared to go to such extremities, and immediately opened negotiations with the besiegers, which resulted in the capitulation of the city on the 22d of February. On learning of the fall of Paisandu, and that Montevideo was in so desperate a situation that it must either capitulate or share the same fate, the Oriental Minister in Paraguay, Sagastume, retired, leaving his secretary, Francisco Rodriguez Larreta, in charge of the legation. Among the acts of the five days' presidency of Villalba was the recall of that legation; but as no official notice of it reached Paraguay for a long time afterwards, Rodriguez kept his flag flying and claimed to be the representative of the Oriental government for some months after, and until the Paraguayan government declined to longer



recognize his official capacity. Before his diplomatic relations had been formally closed, however, he had asked for his passports to leave the country. They were not given to him; and though afterwards he repeatedly asked for them, and notified the government of his desire to go away, he was not permitted to do so. Though coming to Paraguay in a diplomatic capacity, and according to all the rules of international law entitled to protection of his person while in the country and to full liberty to leave it without molestation or hindrance, he was detained in Paraguay, and finally, as we shall see hereafter, made a close prisoner, tortured, and executed.

The members of the Oriental government who had made themselves particularly obnoxious to their conquerors fled, on the surrender of the city, on board of the English and other men-of-war lying in the harbor, and thence were generally conveyed to Concepcion del Uruguay, the capital of Entre Rios, where they were well received, and remained for some months under the avowed protection of General Urquiza. Urquiza's attitude in this war had, up to this time, been evasive and suspicious. Lopez had long been endeavoring to engage him in some sort of a secret alliance, by which he would support him in the war which he contemplated against Mitre, as it was supposed that the Ex-President was not satisfied with the unimportant part he was playing at that time, but was anxious to be again at the head of the government of the Argentine Confederation. Urquiza, it was well known, had been engaged in a protracted correspondence with Lopez, having in view all the time his own interests, and ready to take up arms simultaneously with Lopez, provided such an act would not too much endanger his influence and authority in Entre Rios, — which province he ruled almost as absolutely as Lopez did Paraguay, notwithstanding that it was counted as one of the states of the Argentine Confederation, and was duly represented in the general Congress. What the substance of the correspondence was will probably never be divulged, though, knowing what were then the designs of Lopez, and knowing that many secret agents were passing to and fro between them,



and from another fact to be hereafter related, the general tenor of it may be divined. The last of the bearers of these letters from Urquiza to Lopez was Don José Ramirez, who visited Asuncion in January, 1865, and Major Carranza, who arrived the following March. Towards the latter part of the war they both fell under the suspicion of Lopez, for what cause is unknown, and both were subjected to long imprisonment and torture, and were finally shot. About the same time Colonel Francisco Laguna also arrived in Paraguay. He had come as commissioner on the part of the Oriental exiles then living in Concepcion del Uruguay. Another person of note, who appeared soon after, was Colonel Coriolano Marquez, who, having been one of the followers and upholders of Rosas during the days of his terrible power, naturally fled to Lopez as a person whose government he would approve and whom he would like to serve. Having, for some recent act of atrocity, been condemned to death and cast into prison, Marquez had managed to escape from his jailers, and served for a month or two in the Oriental army ; but being suspected of conspiring against the government of President Aguirre, whose policy and measures were not sufficiently sanguinary to suit his gaucho nature, he abandoned him and fled to Paraguay. He was not looked upon, however, as a valuable acquisition by Lopez, though he was allowed for some three years to live unmolested in or near the capital, where his means of support was writing patriotic and fulsome eulogies of the great, the brave, the magnanimous Lopez for the illiterate but patriotic women of the country, who were ordered to appear at public festivals and pronounce discourses in praise of their brave protector, the Marshal President of Paraguay.

The capture of the Argentine steamers in the port of Corrientes on the 13th of April was followed up on the 14th — the day of the assassination of President Lincoln — by the despatch of a Paraguayan force under command of General Wenceslao Robles (the same officer who was the hero in the attack upon the *Water Witch* at Fort Itapiru, and subse-



quently the chief of the military tribunal which investigated the charges of conspiracy against Padre Maiz and others immediately after the election of President Lopez, in 1862), to occupy the town of Corrientes. The descent upon this unfortunate town was so sudden that no resistance was made. The telegraph having before this been completed from Asuncion to Humaita, the news was received the same day at the former place; and that night the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Berges, embarked for Corrientes with a number of other Paraguayans to serve as assistants in administering the affairs of that province. He was accompanied also by two Correntinos then residing in Asuncion. One of these, Victor Silvero, who had been known as an intriguing politician in Corrientes, became subsequently the principal writer for the *Semanario*; and the other, Sinforiano Caceres, was a cattle-dealer, who, previous to the commencement of hostilities, had brought over large numbers of cattle for the Paraguayan army. In this business Caceres had a partnership with Mrs. Lynch, and through her influence with Lopez he was able to secure very profitable contracts.

The day after the arrival of the party at Corrientes, the people of the town were summoned to elect a provisional government in place of the one of which all the members had fled the night before the entry of the Paraguayans. The latter, with a few of the citizens who were influenced by Silvero and Caceres, held an election, the result of which was that Silvero and Caceres, with an old man by the name of Gauna, were declared to be elected as a government Junta. This Junta had no real powers, for the election was but a farce, and intended only to make it appear that whatever outrages might be committed were to be charged to a government elected by the people themselves, while all real authority was in the hands of Lopez's minister. The people of Corrientes submitted sullenly and silently to a state of affairs to which they were in no condition to make any resistance; but on the whole their rights and property were more respected than in any of the other towns that were taken by the troops of



Lopez, as the city was not sacked, and the soldiers were kept under a fair degree of restraint. Some of the prominent men, including the Spanish consul, were arrested and sent to Humaita, where, after a long imprisonment, they shared the fate of all others on whom the heavy hand of Lopez chanced to fall. Several Correntino ladies, whose husbands were known to be in the army, were likewise arrested, and, with their young children, carried as prisoners to Paraguay, where they were subjected to the most inhuman treatment till all, women and children alike, perished of want, exposure, or worse.

The news of the invasion of Corrientes, following as it did the seizure of the steamers, created among the people of Buenos Aires a most intense excitement. The people with one voice cried out for vengeance against the selfish despot of Paraguay, who, like a barbarian and savage, had commenced war without giving notice, and in a manner unknown to civilized nations. They hitherto had approved the action of President Mitre in refusing to be drawn into a war with Paraguay, but this outrage was such an insult to the national dignity that the whole nation cried out for war, and the same evening that the news of it reached Buenos Aires a great multitude of people assembled in front of President Mitre's house, all clamorous for action against Lopez. Mitre addressed the crowd in his usual eloquent, though somewhat inflated style, and told them that the government would not be wanting in energy to avenge the insult of the despot of Paraguay. "Go home," said he, "to your beds, and to-morrow meet me at the barracks. Within one week we will be on the march to Corrientes, and within three months we will be in Asuncion."

Lopez by his folly had done for Brazil what Paranhos, with all his promises, had not been able to effect. He had forced the Argentines to take up arms against him, and, if they were to make war successfully, to form an alliance against him as against a common foe.

In despair of enlisting President Mitre as an ally, Paranhos had returned to Rio, when the news of the invasion of Cor-



rientes reached Buenos Aires, and had been succeeded by Councillor Octaviano d'Almeida Rosa, who was sent as a special envoy to the Plata, to have a general superintendence of Brazilian interests in the river. But it was now easy for Octaviano to do what his more able and experienced predecessor had been unable to accomplish. The government at Montevideo, which had been established by Flores with the assistance of Brazil, was summoned to despatch a plenipotentiary to Buenos Aires to participate in the formation of an alliance of the three powers against Paraguay, and the famous secret treaty known as the "Triple Alliance" was soon after formed.

The provisions of this treaty are so curious as to merit more attention than the nature of this work will permit. The first five articles of the treaty provide that the three powers shall respectively contribute all the means at their disposal to the common cause; that the chief command and direction of the allied armies by land shall be confided to General Bartholomé Mitre, President of the Argentine Republic; that the maritime forces shall be under the command of Vice-Admiral Viscount Tamandaré; that General Flores shall have a separate, though subordinate, command of the forces, composed of a division of Argentine troops and another of Brazilian, besides the quota furnished by Uruguay; and that the Brazilian land forces shall be under the immediate orders of General Osorio, but subordinate to the commander-in-chief of the whole army, General Mitre. Each government was to furnish the arms, clothing, equipments, and all other supplies, required by its own troops. These preliminaries arranged, the treaty then stipulates that the allies will not lay down their arms until they have abolished the existing government of Paraguay, neither treat separately with Lopez nor sign any treaty of peace, truce, or armistice, or suspend the war unless by the common consent of all. The treaty then asserts that the war is not against the people of Paraguay, but against the existing government, and that the allies will permit a Paraguayan legion to be formed of the citizens of that nation who may



wish to assist in deposing Lopez from power. In this treaty the allies also bound themselves to respect the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Paraguay ; that the Paraguayan people should be at liberty to elect their own government and give it any institutions they might desire ; and that no one of the allies would either annex it to their own territory or establish any protectorate as a consequence of the war. The treaty, moreover, stipulated that, when the existing government of Paraguay had disappeared, the allies would make such arrangements with that which might succeed it as to insure the free navigation of the rivers Parana and Paraguay, so that in future the laws of that Republic should not obstruct or prevent the direct navigation of war or merchant vessels of the allied states on their voyages to their respective territories and dominions.

Another provision of this treaty, which shows how little the allies understood the nature of the contest into which they were about to enter, or of the resources of the country whose government they had undertaken to overthrow, provided that the expenses of the war should be borne by Paraguay, and that all the damages caused to public or private property or to the persons of their citizens previous to the declaration of war, and all damages subsequently done in violation of the laws of war, should be paid for from the Paraguayan exchequer. Besides these provisions, it had others providing what should be the future boundaries of Paraguay ; the Brazilians taking to themselves all that they had ever claimed during the long controversy which had been pending from the time of the early settlement of the country. X

To the treaty containing such stipulations, and many others almost equally absurd, was appended a protocol, in which it was declared that the fortifications at Humaita should be demolished, and the construction of any others like them should never be permitted ; and that the government which might be established in Paraguay after the overthrow of Lopez should not be left in possession of any arms or munitions of war, but that whatever might be found in the country should be equally



distributed among the allies, and all trophies or booty which might be taken from the enemy should be divided between the allies and the one making the capture. The parties to this singular treaty wisely resolved that the provisions of it should be kept secret, but, like most state secrets, it became prematurely public. The Oriental plenipotentiary having given it in confidence to Mr. Lettsom, the English *Chargé d'Affaires* in Montevideo, he, in turn, sent it as a secret communication to his own government. It was then published in utter disregard of the faith and confidence under which it had been confided to Mr. Lettsom.

Immediately after the signing of the treaty by the ministers of the three powers, the Brazilian fleet, which had been lying at Montevideo, moved up the Parana to hold in check the advancing Paraguayan forces, and to prevent all communication between Paraguay and the lower countries. As soon as a force could be collected by General Mitre, General Paunero was sent with a small army to take up his station in the southern part of the province of Corrientes and watch the Paraguayans who were now marching in force from Corrientes along the bank of the river, and had reached Bella Vista, a town of some four thousand inhabitants. General Robles, on moving south from Corrientes, had with him an army of twenty-five thousand men, having left a garrison of only fifteen hundred troops and two small guns for the defence of that city. After he had left, and was engaged in ravaging the country to the southward and sacking the towns, the war-worn and scarred Argentine veteran, General Paunero, succeeded in persuading the Brazilian commander of the squadron to take on board a body of four thousand men, and convey them above the main force of Robles for the purpose of recapturing Corrientes. The squadron, consisting of eight Brazilian and two Argentine steamers, moved up the river and took position in front of the city so as to rake the streets. About two thousand of these troops were landed with two six-pounder guns, and while the fleet was bombarding the Paraguayans, they were also attacked by the



Argentine troops that had been landed, and a fierce hand-to-hand fight took place, in which it is said great courage was displayed on both sides. The Paraguayans, however, were obliged to leave the city, and made a stand on a stone bridge, half a mile to the north, where they were all the while exposed to the fire of the fleet as well as to that of the infantry.

As Colonel Thompson says in his history of the war, "the Brazilians here first showed a peculiarity in their tactics, which consists in firing whenever they have any guns to fire with, whether or not they see what they are firing at, no matter whether they kill friend or foe, or both together, — which last is generally the case." The Paraguayans were finally forced to retreat; and as Paunero had not sufficient force to hold the city in case the Paraguayans should be reinforced by Robles, he re-embarked and went down the river to join his main army. The triumvirate government of Lopez, that had retreated from the city before the battle commenced, returned as soon as Paunero and his troops had re-embarked, and re-established their government.

The attitude of General Urquiza by this time had become a very important consideration to both parties in the war. He had undoubtedly coquetted with Lopez, and encouraged him in his warlike preparations with assurances that at the proper time he would make common cause with him against Mitre. But in this Urquiza had not foreseen that Lopez would commence the war with such an outrage on Brazil as would compel the Emperor to put forth all the energies of the government for his destruction. A war against the Argentine Republic alone, or against Flores in support of the legitimate government of Montevideo, was what Urquiza had been contemplating during all the time that he was holding such friendly correspondence with Lopez; but now since the legal government of Montevideo had fallen, and Montevideo, and indeed the whole country of the Uruguay, was subject to his authority, supported as it was by the entire Brazilian army and navy, with the Argentine government in alliance with the two, Urquiza shrunk from compromising himself any further with



Lopez. On the contrary, he hastened to make peace with Mitre by giving extraordinary pledges of loyalty and devotion to the national cause ; and in proof that he was acting in good faith, he delivered unopened into his hands a package of despatches from Lopez that had just reached him. Mitre ordered the publication of the letters, and put the bearer of them in prison. Urquiza, doubtful of what might be the general result, and feeling that it was necessary for him to do something to make good his professions by acts, returned to his own province of Entre Rios, and began to collect the troops that he had promised to furnish to the national army. His whole course during the war, however, was evasive. Though he collected his army, for which he received arms and clothing from the federal government, yet he contrived to infuse into them his own spirit, so that when they were sent to join Mitre they all scattered on the route and returned to their homes. Urquiza pretended that they had done this in spite of him and against his will, and promised to have a still larger force ready for the field within a month. But his troops were of little or no service in the war. He was a bad man and a bad subject, and was ready at any time to join Lopez, could he have foreseen that such a step would have been to his advantage. He was one of those successful gauchos, who had begun his career by cutting throats and appropriating to himself the property of his victims until he had got an entire province almost wholly under his sway, and was ready to make war if by so doing he could establish himself again at the head of the federal government, and yet incur no risk of endangering his immense but ill-gotten possessions.\*

It is not the purpose of this work to give anything like a history of the war. The writer had few advantages beyond people who were not near the scene of it that would enable

\* Of the most conspicuous figures in the late war it is remarkable how many of them perished by violence. Netto, the feudal lord, who dragooned the Brazilian government into espousing the cause of Flores, perished, ere reaching Paraguay, at Corrientes ; Flores was assassinated in Montevideo in 1868 ; and Urquiza shared a like fate in his palace, in Entre Rios, just as the war, which he had encouraged in its first stages, had closed with the death of Lopez.



him to describe the events as they appeared to those who were in the respective camps of the belligerents. Besides, the history of the war, as it appeared from the Paraguayan side, has been written by the person most competent of all in the Paraguayan camp to give a succinct narrative of the long-protracted struggle. From this work numerous extracts will be made, but mainly in reference to the peculiar discipline of the Paraguayan camp, rather than to the military operations or the progress of the war.\*

\* "The War in Paraguay, with a Historical Sketch of the Country and its People, and Notes upon the Military Engineering of the War. By George Thompson, C. E., Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers in the Paraguayan Army, Aide-de-Camp to President Lopez, Knight of the Order of Merit of Paraguay, etc." The author of this work was the principal engineer of Lopez, and under his strategical eye were the points selected for the erection of the batteries, which, under his superintendence were so formidable in repelling the attacks of the Allies, and for the defence of which Lopez had nothing to do but to send his troops and guns in accordance with the suggestions of his engineer. Though Colonel Thompson takes no particular credit to himself for the part which he took, yet his simple and plain narrative of events as they transpired, and of the labors in which he was engaged, shows very clearly that the credit for military skill which has been claimed for Lopez is nearly all due to the unpretending Englishman whose services Lopez finally requited by denouncing him as a traitor and deserter.



### CHAPTER III.

Popular Demonstrations in Support of the Government. — The Press of Paraguay. — The *Paraguay Independiente*. — The *Eco del Paraguay*. — The *Semanario*. — Inordinate Vanity of Lopez. — Sources of Information. — The Postmaster-General of Paraguay. — Antipathy of the Paraguayans to the Brazilians. — The Paraguayan *versus* the Brazilian Soldiers. — Matto Grosso. — Mitre refuses to permit the Paraguayans to pass through the Misiones. — Brazil vainly seeks an Alliance with Buenos Aires against Lopez. — Buenos Aires determines to remain Neutral. — General Urquiza's Intrigues with Lopez and Mitre. — Congress convoked. — Charges against the Argentine Government. — Lopez made Marshal. — The Order of Merit.

WHILE the government had been occupied in its war-like preparations preceding the first act of overt hostility, it had not been unmindful of its interior affairs. The public that never for fifty years had dared dissent from, censure, or criticise a single act of the sovereign, whether official or private, had let every act of tyranny or oppression pass without protest and with seeming approval. But now that war was resolved upon, the people were required to make public demonstrations of loyalty and enthusiasm. The ambiguous protest of the 30th of August might mean war or peace. No one outside of Paraguay, unless it were the Oriental ambassadors, supposed that it meant the former, and the Paraguayan people had no idea whom they were to war against. They had judged from the *Semanario* that the offending power was the Argentine Republic, for up to that time there had been no recent complaint of Brazil. From this "Protest," however, it appeared that Brazil was the greater offender, and that the Paraguayan arms would be turned against the Empire. Hence it was pretended that it was in the holy cause of republicanism against the encroachments of monarchy and slavery that the war was to be



waged. The demonstrations in support of the government were made to take the form of public meetings in different parts of the country. At these meetings the people were invited to attend, but the invitation was of that kind that all knew it would be disregarded at the price of life or liberty. At such meetings, all who were competent to do it were expected to make patriotic speeches, pledging themselves to support the government to the last. Then, to fix them more irrevocably, they were invited to sign declarations in the form of addresses to the President, in which, after reciting their approval of his valiant and spirited conduct, they pledge to him "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor." At all these ratification meetings the President was sure to have not only the *gefés* and *juezes* of the district, who had been appointed by himself to be his agents and instruments of despotism, but his secret spies to report the least expression or indication of dissent from the course he was pursuing. The people, who knew this, and knew that anything short of implicit acquiescence and assumed enthusiasm would consign them to prison, gave their names without exception. For weeks after the publication of the protest the *Semanario* was filled with the names of all the principal men of the country, —all those who had any property that was worth taking, or sufficient influence or standing to pretend to respectability. The people of the capital were first subjected to this sacrificial process. In the *Semanario* of the 17th of September, 1864, are given the names of every man who was the head of a family within the limits of the capital, and of all others above the rank of peon or slave. I append the names of seventy-eight persons who, being leading citizens of Asuncion, had the honor of heading the list.\* None of them were living at

\* Andres Gill, Chief-Justice; died September, 1865. José Maria Montiel, Criminal Judge; died in prison. José Falcon, Keeper of Archives; sent to the army in disgrace, with two pairs of fetters; afterwards a judge in the inquisition. Domingo Rojas Aranda, Justice of the Peace, cousin of Lopez; imprisoned, with two pairs of fetters; was released, and soon died. Saturnino Bedoya, Treasurer; married Lopez's sister; degraded to the ranks as a private soldier, accused of conspiracy, and expired in the torture. Miguel Antonio Baez, Justice of the Peace;



the end of the war, except three or four who deserted or were taken prisoners. Of the rest, nearly all were either executed by order of Lopez, or died while in prison from starvation and torture. In his official papers, those who expired under the torture are simply mentioned as having *died*.

The *Semanario* was the only paper published in Paraguay for seven years preceding the war, and of course was the government organ. The first periodical ever published in the country was called the *Paraguayo Independiente*, and the first number was issued in April, 1845. It was established as an organ for the elder Lopez, and was conducted by him at the state's expense, and the leading articles were all from his pen. It continued with more or less regularity

died 1865. Silvestre Aveiro, Escribano ; became major, Campaign Secretary, and chief torturer. Carlos Riveros, Chief Clerk of Interior ; imprisoned, with two pairs of fetters ; afterward accused of conspiracy, and shot, August 26, 1868. Miguel Haedo, became captain in the army ; shot as a traitor, August 26, 1868. Miguel Berges, Justice of the Peace ; received Order of Merit ; died in prison in the army, July 20, 1868. Luis Caminos, became Chief Campaign Secretary and Minister of State and of War ; killed with Lopez, March 1, 1870. José Maria Ibañez. Santiago Aramburu, merchant ; died April, 1866. Gumesindo Benitez, editor of *Semanario*, became Secretary of State, and conducted Lopez's correspondence concerning Carreras, Bliss, and Masterman ; was himself accused of conspiracy in August, loaded with the heaviest fetters, and shot with Carreras and forty-five others, on Sunday, September 27, 1868. Natalicio Talavera, army correspondent ; died September, 1867. José Maria Lamas, private soldier ; killed May 24, 1866. Julian Aquino, Director of Government Printing Press ; shot August 9, 1868. Bernardo Ortellado, Secretary of Legation in United States in 1860 ; Chief-Justice, 1867 ; shot as a traitor, September 27, 1868. Adolfo Saguier, cousin of Lopez, artillery officer ; made judge in conspiracy trials ; thrown into prison, and captured by Brazilians, December, 1868. Francisco Fernandez, chief overseer of Lopez's private estate, colonel, and acting Minister of War ; shot August 26, 1868. Ramon Villa, died 1867. Feliz Larrosa, Justice of the Peace ; made private soldier, died in the army. Manuel M. Rivarola, Justice of the Peace, private soldier, died 1867 ; his daughter Dolores bayoneted, December, 1868. Pablo A. Gonzalez, Collector of Customs ; shot August 26, 1868. Vicente Dentella, Inspector of Tobacco ; private soldier, shot September 27, 1868. Policarpo G. Garro, Prosecuting Attorney of Criminal Court, "died in prison," July 15, 1868. José Vicente Urdapilleta, Chief-Justice ; shot August 22, 1868, with one hundred and seven others. Escolastico Garcete, Justice of the Peace, "died in prison," July 25, 1868. Isidoro Recalde, died 1867. Apolinar Chirife, made common soldier ; died 1867, daughters imprisoned. Fermin Bazaraz, Criminal Judge ; shot August 9, 1868. Eustaquio Recalde, died in prison. Santiago Ozcariz, Justice of the Peace,



till September, 1852, when it was suspended; and the government had no organ till May, 1853, at which time the first number of the *Semanario* appeared, at first under the editorial direction of Dr. Juan Andres Gelly, who was afterwards the secretary of the younger Lopez on his diplomatic mission to Europe. He was the father of General Gelly y Obes, who subsequently figured in the war of the "Triple Alliance" against Paraguay as the Argentine Minister of War. This was published, as it name imports, weekly, and had the field to itself until 1856, when a Spanish adventurer by the name of Bermejo started another, though not a rival paper, that he called the *Eco del Paraguay*. This was started as a hebdomadal, with pretensions to a literary character; but

shot July 29, 1868. Pastor Gonzalez, died in the army. Abdon Molinas, officer of Treasury; "died in prison," August 4, 1868. Pascual Bedoya, officer of Treasury; died 1868. Sebastian Ibarra, officer of Treasury; shot August 22, 1868. Zenon Rodriguez, Fiscal of Criminal Court; died 1868. Francisco Acosta. Miguel A. Haedo, in Buenos Aires during the war. Ramon Marecos, chief of Villa Rica, poet and nephew of Francia, imprisoned and died. Indalecio Benitez, died in the army. German Serrano; became colonel, was wounded, and captured by allies, November, 1868. Cesareo Montiel, clerk in War Office; imprisoned and died. José Maria Caminos, Justice of the Peace in Recoleta; imprisoned, further fate unknown. Higinio Uriarte. José D. Candia, government clerk; died 1867. Elias Ortellado, lieutenant; shot with his brother, the last Chief-Justice, September 27, 1868. Ildefonso Machain, merchant, lost three sons in the army, was persecuted and ruined, and died 1868. Antonio Sayas. Hilario Recalde, merchant, died in prison. Pedro P. Haedo, died 1868. Guillermo Sosa, made private soldier, imprisoned, and died. Juan C. Centurion, educated in England, confidant of Lopez, fate unknown. Nicolas A. Isasi, ecclesiastical notary; wounded May 24, 1866. Juan B. Castillo. Sinfioriano Pereira, captain; wounded repeatedly, died 1868. Andres A. Urdapilleta, shot with his brother the Chief-Justice, August 22, 1868. Jaime Garcia, deserted from Curuzú, September, 1866; mother and sisters exiled, property confiscated. Manuel Solalinde, army surgeon. Bernardo Decoud, killed in battle. Miguel A. Elorduy, major-domo of the cathedral; shot as a traitor, July 16, 1868. Juan F. Escauriza, died 1867. Juan A. Ibarra. Benigno Gonzalez, died 1867. Juan M. Villalba. Francisco de P. Bedoya, died. Manuel Perina, died 1867, in the army. José Maria Sandoval, died 1866, in the army. Juan B. Gill, taken as medical assistant, fate unknown. Bernardino Cabral, government clerk; shot August 22, 1868. Leonardo Sion, clerk in Treasury, son of Lopez's brother-in-law; shot August 23, 1868. Laureano Gomez, fate unknown. Facundo Talavera, killed in battle. José Isidoro Troche, "died in prison," July 19, 1868. Matias Sanabria, Chief of Police, and major; shot September 27, 1868.



afterwards it was issued for a few weeks as a semi-weekly, and in the end became so like the official organ, that, after an existence of about a year and a half, it ceased, and its founder was made editor of the *Semanario*. He was a man of some literary acquirements; and during the time that he occupied the tripod the articles were better written, and smacked less of fulsome adulation of the ruling power, than ever before or since. But even then it was so entirely a government organ that an editorial notice had almost as much force as an official decree. A remark in it tending to show that any individual had committed any breach of etiquette or duty was sufficient to cause other people to avoid him, and thus his business might be ruined. If there were any question of difference with another government, its columns were filled with the grossest abuse of that government and its people, so that such as happened to be resident in the country were the marks for the insolence of officials and the insults of the populace.

On the accession of the younger Lopez to the Presidency, however, the *Semanario* as it had been was not enough for his grosser appetite. The young man, though he had not, like Achilles, been reared on bears' marrow and lions' hearts, had fed so much on adulation and sycophancy that nothing else agreed with his stomach. His name and fame must figure exclusively in every page and every column. He was not like Themistocles, who complained that the honors of Miltiades would not let him sleep; but, rather, like Dionysius, he could not endure that his subjects should talk or think of anybody but himself. Bermejo, who was a Spaniard and had seen other parts of the world, could not seriously make his praises sufficiently eulogistic and fulsome to suit the inordinate vanity of his master, and therefore he was dismissed from his thankless position, that had given him but a meagre living during his years of servitude, soon after which he left the country. He was succeeded in this office by a native named Gúmesindo Benitez, — a man who afterwards united to the duties of editor those of Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and chief spy, until his master, having re-



solved on the general massacre of the foreigners in his power, as well as of all the more intelligent Paraguayans, caused him to be arrested and subjected to a refinement of torture unknown to the Spanish Inquisition, and afterwards shot. His part in the terrible oppressions of the people, to which he seemed to lend a willing hand, will appear from time to time as the narrative proceeds; and the extracts I shall make from the *Semanario* will give a good illustration of the perfect union of servility and tyranny in the same character. With the change of editors, the character and tone of the paper changed. Though the editorials were more loosely written, they were more abounding in praise of "the great Lopez." As the paper had few extracts and scarcely any business notices, but was made up almost entirely of original matter, the labor of writing the editorials was considerable, although the paper was issued only once a week, and on a small folio sheet of twenty-one by fourteen inches to the page. Others besides Benitez were employed to write on such subjects as were given them, but all was submitted to the revision of the President, who might thus be literally styled the chief editor of the paper. Thus all the fulsome and disgusting flattery and adulation that filled its columns was written and published by his orders; and if they were always in the same strain, extolling him as the wisest and greatest man of all time, who so well as himself knew how great he was?

Bermejo left early in 1863, and soon after it was found necessary to enlarge the paper and increase the capacity of the printing-office. New presses and type were accordingly ordered from England; a new building was erected; and in April, 1864, the new office was opened with as much formality as would be observed in our country in dedicating a cathedral. The President was to honor the occasion, and after the usual manner people were invited to attend. Having had the honor to be present, I was struck, notwithstanding I had by this time become used to such things, by the placards on the walls, all in the same strain of idolatry to the President. The different presses had their forms already set to work off



and distribute hand-bills, mottoes, and apostrophes among the crowd. From one of these we quote sufficient to show the style of the whole: "Let the press be the means of publicly conveying the sincere expression of gratitude to our illustrious President; let it do justice to its indefatigable protector, the laborious citizen who devotes his life and genius to the sacred cause of the country; let it be ready to defend with dignity the inalienable rights of Paraguay, to diffuse knowledge and morality among her children, and to crown the Republic with glory, power, and civilization. Long live the President! Long live the enlightened protector of the Paraguayan press!"

Another slip was filled with the following morsels suited to the delicate taste of the President. "No. 1. Glory to the illustrious CITIZEN CARLOS ANTONIO LOPEZ, Founder of the National Press!—No. 2. *Vive* the most Excellent Señor President of the Republic, Citizen Francisco Solano Lopez!—No. 3. *Vive* the illustrious Protector of the National Press!—No. 4. Gratitude to the Supreme Magistrate of the Republic that has deigned to honor the establishment of the National Press!—No. 5. Gratitude to the intelligent assembly that does us the honor of visiting the establishment of the National Press!—No. 6. *Vive* this day, 19th of April, memorable to the establishment of the Press of the Republic for the visit of the most excellent Señor President of the Republic, the blessing of the establishment, and the numerous company that honors it!"

This is the kind of stuff that the morbid vanity of the President craved; and as he strutted through the office, the people near him silent and subdued, looking awestruck and afraid, he evidently felt himself a god.

After the war commenced the *Semanario* was looked for with more interest than ever before; for though it contained little news, it informed people on what subjects they might converse. It might be known that something disastrous had occurred, but until the fact was promulgated in the *Semanario* it was unsafe to speak of it; and many instances occurred of



persons being arrested and thrown into prison for spreading false reports, which, however, the *Semanario* a few days later would be obliged to confirm. Nothing unfavorable was ever published in its columns unless it was of such magnitude that it could not be kept a secret; and then, if it were a repulse or defeat in battle, it was always represented as a great victory, and the explosion of a powder magazine or the loss of a steamer was only alluded to as a trifling incident, so insignificant as to call for an apology for making mention of it. Yet, as it was the only newspaper in the capital, people, in their doubt and anxiety, looked for its appearance with an impatience such as perhaps few papers in the history of the world ever excited. This interest was much increased by the great irregularity in its days of publication. Though professing at the head of its columns to be issued every Saturday, yet, during the first four years of the war, though it appeared on every other day of the week, it never was issued on a Saturday. Rarely it would be out on Sunday, often on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, and not unfrequently it would not appear before Friday. The delay would naturally lead to the expectation of important news; but so often was the paper, which was so eagerly looked for, filled with little else than rhapsodies on the great Lopez, that after a time people lost interest in it. They learned that it was not published to give information of the actual circumstances, but to create such a belief in the situation as the President desired should prevail.

Before the war the Paraguayan people had scarcely any other source of information than this government organ for obtaining news respecting what was going on in other parts of the world. The newspapers from Buenos Aires and Montevideo were virtually prohibited to them, and I question if there was a native of the country who was a subscriber to one of them. Foreigners resident in Asuncion subscribed for such papers, but there was never a package of them entered the country, except such as were addressed to a foreign minister or consul, without being broken open at the post-



office and read, to see if it might contain something against Paraguay or its benign government. The person to whom was assigned this ungrateful task was an old man by the name of Acuña. He was the Postmaster-General of Paraguay, and, though a native of the Argentine province of Tucuman, had come in his youth to Paraguay, where he had married into the unfortunate Machain family. Notwithstanding his being so far in the confidence of the government as to be intrusted with this office, he was a most excellent man, and was my intimate friend. His wife was one of those rare persons who spend their whole lives in acts of charity. Their unhappy fate will be related in its place.

The hereditary feeling of hatred and antipathy against the Brazilians, which had in a measure subsided during the long isolation of Paraguay, was now fanned into flame by the *Semanario*. The space in its columns not occupied by praises of Lopez as the greatest, bravest hero of all time was devoted to abuse of the Brazilians, who were always spoken of as creatures almost beneath contempt ; as *macacos* (monkeys) that would fly from the face of the great warrior of Paraguay and his valiant legions like withered leaves before the tempest. The Paraguayans, even then, seemed to be impressed with the conviction that "one Paraguayan could whip ten Brazilians," and it must be confessed that as the war went on they had little reason to change their opinion. The Paraguayans throughout the war fought with a courage never surpassed ; while the Brazilian officers, with very few exceptions, showed such cowardice, such lack of generalship, such weakness and imbecility, as could hardly be believed of any people who were not born slaves. This charge, however, cannot be justly made against the soldiers in the ranks. They were generally strong, healthy men, and with good officers would have made excellent soldiers. Nor did they lack for courage, as wherever they were ordered to go there they went ; and in those engagements in which they were thrown into confusion and so terribly cut to pieces, it was because the officers had failed to do their duty and keep their troops



in order. Many a time during the war would Lopez and his whole army have been destroyed or captured, had the Brazilian commanders followed up their first successes. But the necessary command was not given, and so time after time the golden opportunity was lost.

The expedition to Matto Grosso had been a success, so far that the lower part of the province, including the city of Corumbá, was in the hands of the Paraguayans; but to take the whole province would have required a larger force than Lopez cared to risk so far away from his own territory. The city of Cuyabá, having a population of some twenty-five thousand inhabitants, is situated so high upon the head-waters of the river Paraguay, being some two hundred leagues above the frontiers of the country, that it is only reached by steamers of light draught, and it was therefore impracticable to take the whole province at that time. To attempt it would have required most of the disposable forces, and before it could be accomplished very likely the Brazilians would attack from below. It was therefore left to a subsequent season, in order to strike a blow at a more accessible point of the Empire. Unfortunately, there is a narrow strip of country lying between the Parana and the Uruguay, which separates Paraguay from Brazil, and which belongs to the Argentine Republic. This is called the Misiones, and it was here that the Jesuits attained their greatest power and wealth. The title to it has always been in dispute between Paraguay and the Argentine government, though the Paraguayans have always exercised jurisdiction over the northern part of it, while the Argentines have held exclusive sway over the southern part. To attack Brazil in this direction, Lopez must pass his troops over territory not his own; and accordingly in February, 1865, he sent a note to the Argentine government, asking permission to send an army across this district of Misiones. Of course it could not be granted officially and formally without involving the country in the war; and of all things President Mitre desired to avoid any complication that would array his country again in arms. The last civil war had resulted in



uniting all the provinces under one government, with himself at the head of it ; and if peace could only be maintained, the whole country had a fairer prospect for advancement and prosperity than it had ever enjoyed. The Brazilian government, however, was exceedingly anxious to form an alliance with the Argentine ; and its two ablest ministers, Saraiva and Paranhos, had exhausted all their diplomacy to induce Mitre and his government to give at least their moral support to the Brazilians. They offered all they could promise to this end, proposing to furnish all the men, money, ships, and munitions of war, if they might formally and publicly claim them as allies. They evidently saw that, to carry on a war against Paraguay, in which they must send their troops and supplies by the river through a thousand miles of Argentine territory, or else pass them by land over the same Misiones that had been refused to Lopez for a like purpose, would in all probability bring on a collision, and, sooner or later, war with Buenos Aires. Therefore an alliance was sought by every means possible. President Mitre, however, was inflexible. Appealed to by both parties, he declared his purpose to remain neutral and impartial. To Lopez's absurd request he replied in terms so curt as to savor of disdain, and it seemed strange that so preposterous a proposition should ever have been made.

At this moment it was discovered that General Urquiza, the governor of the province of Entre Rios, who fills so conspicuous a place in the Argentine history, had not been idle during the impending difficulties. He had been intriguing with Mitre and Lopez, and supposed he knew their secrets. He had both fear and dislike of the Brazilians, as, like many others, he apprehended that it was the ulterior object of Brazil to make the rivers Paraguay and Parana the western boundary of the Empire. This project, if carried into effect, would of course destroy his power as absolute despot of the province of Entre Rios, and would deprive him of his enormous and ill-gotten fortune. It was by his advice that Lopez had made his application ; and assurances were given, that, if it was refused,



Urquiza would pronounce *against* Mitre. But though the request of Lopez was so laconically denied, Urquiza failed to make good his promises. In fact, it was too late for him to move without bringing on himself, not only his own government, but that of Brazil and the forces under Flores, who was already in alliance with Brazil and in possession of nearly all the defensible points of the Oriental Republic. Of course, Urquiza would not make an alliance with Paraguay with such odds against him ; and Lopez found that, after all his craft and intrigue, he was finally to be left to carry on the war alone.

There is no doubt, however, that if, instead of asking permission of Mitre to send his troops across the Misiones, he had actually done so, there would have been no other result than a long diplomatic correspondence, complaints of violation of territory, explanations, and new protests of friendship. The people of Buenos Aires were very strongly opposed to any act that might lead to war, and the same sentiments prevailed throughout all the provinces. The passage of an army of ten or twenty thousand men through a tract of country almost uninhabited would not have been regarded either by Mitre, or his government, or the people of Buenos Aires, as sufficient cause for declaring war against Paraguay ; and had Lopez sent over at that time one fourth part of his disposable force, he would have made such havoc on the western frontier of the province of Rio Grande, which was then all unprotected and exposed, as would have done infinite injury to Brazil, and perhaps have forced it to overlook the indignity and insult of the capture of the Marques de Olinda, and propose terms of peace.

This course, however, Lopez did not follow. On the contrary, he took a step that compelled Mitre and the Argentine nation to do the very thing that Saraiva and Paranhos had failed to accomplish. Not only had he begun war on Brazil in such an insulting manner that it would never treat with him, but he now resolved to do the same thing towards Buenos Aires. He determined, without previous notice, and when it was wholly unexpected, to commit an act of such gross violence and illegality as would unite the whole Argentine peo-



ple against him, and force the government into a war that could never end but with his own destruction. As we have before said, he regarded Mitre as the Mordecai in the gate,— the man whose military and civil successes were shutting out from the world the light of his own greatness, and his earlier preparations for war had been made with the idea of measuring swords with the hero of Pavon. Now he seemed to think his shield was broad enough to take the points of both Mitre and the Emperor, and that his arm was strong enough to overpower them both.

He had begun the war on Brazil of his own volition, and without the formality of consulting a national Congress. But he found by this time that the seizure of the Marques de Olin-da was universally condemned by all who were not in awe of his power. He accordingly resolved to proceed in this instance with more circumspection, and to conform to the usages of civilized nations so far as he could do this and still be absolute in everything. His plan was worthy of a Jesuit father. He called a Congress. On Sunday morning, February 26, the *Semanario* appeared before its usual time, though it was dated the 25th, containing a decree of the President dated ten days previously, summoning a Congress to assemble on the following Sunday, or March 5th. No one in the capital save the President knew anything of this decree previous to its publication, though it professed on its face to have been issued eleven days before, nor did any one suspect the object for which the Congress was to assemble. The citizens of the capital were informally notified by the police that they were to choose their deputies the same day; and they dutifully obeyed, and elected those men that were known to be Lopez's most abject creatures, and that he had previously indicated as entitled to his confidence for their patriotism, intelligence, and loyalty. Measures had already been taken for the elections in other parts to be all held the same day. Orders had been sent to the different partidos, commanding the juezes and gefés, after going through a certain form, to send such and such men to the capital to attend the



Congress that was to convene on the 5th of March. The men thus honored hurried off to Asuncion, not having the least idea of the business on which they had been called. From the more distant partidos the deputies had hardly time to reach the capital before the meeting of the Congress.

The report of the proceedings of this singular and anomalous legislative body, as published in the *Semanario*, is a most curious document, and shows most completely that no one in Paraguay, not even President Lopez, had any idea of the manner of conducting a deliberative assembly. The body was presided over by José Falcon, with the title of Vice-President, though the official report does not inform us how he attained that position, nor was he afterwards designated by that title. Every suggestion made by the different members was referred to a so-called double committee, consisting of sixteen members, though it does not appear from the report that the Congress had anything to do with the appointment of this committee. There was no voting by yeas and nays ; but as all the propositions submitted were understood to have already received the approval of Lopez, they were declared carried by acclamation, and in no case does there appear to have been a dissenting voice. The speeches made by the members had little if any reference to any business before the Congress, but were the mere rambling eulogies of the wisdom and patriotism of the President, which they had been accustomed with slight variations to pronounce for many years on all public occasions, though on this occasion they all terminated with the desire to leave the whole management of the national interests in the hands of Lopez, untrammelled by any conditions. Two propositions, however, were strenuously insisted upon by Congress, apparently against the desire of the government. These were, first, that the President should not absent himself from the limits of the Republic during the impending war ; second, that the President's salary should be raised to sixty thousand dollars per annum. Lopez appeared several times before the Congress, and protested against being denied the privilege of sharing the toils and dangers of the



camp with his patriotic legions, and refused to receive this increased salary, saying that, as they had all pledged their lives and fortunes to sustain the great cause, and as the state would require all its means to maintain its rights and chastise the insolent foe that was threatening the very existence of the Republic, he would accept no additional compensation. The members, however, knew him too well to take him at his word. The propositions in both instances had come from those who were most in his confidence, and therefore his pretending to disapprove of them they knew was but a farce, and they clamorously and loudly insisted that he should yield to their demands ; that he should not expose his valuable life to the dangers of the camp and the battle-field ; and that they should be allowed to contribute from the national fund, as a slight return for the sacrifices he made, and as an expression of gratitude for his services. To these appeals Lopez, with well-feigned reluctance, and after many expressions of thanks to the Congress for their patriotism and confidence, finally yielded. The war was to go on, and if he did not take the field thenceforward he was not to be accused of cowardice or indifference, for the Congress had forbidden his absenting himself from the country or exposing his life in the territory of the enemy.

The members had learned, previous to their being called together, of the warlike acts that had already taken place against Brazil, and had supposed that the proceedings of the Congress would have reference only to a war with that country. But in the messages of the President and of the ministers they were advised that the Argentine government had committed such outrages against the rights and dignity of Paraguay as demanded the serious attention of the government. These outrages were, first, that President Mitre had refused permission for the Paraguayan troops to pass through the Argentine territory to make war on Brazil ; second, he had been in connivance with Brazil and Flores against the independence of Uruguay ; and third, he had permitted the publication of libels and satires by Paraguayan exiles in Buenos Aires on the



character and conduct of President Lopez, and was responsible for the hostile spirit of the Argentine people to Paraguay as expressed through the columns of the newspapers. For these grave wrongs and insults war was recommended against the Argentine Republic, and was formally declared on the 18th of March, 1865. Lopez was ambitious of a higher military title than that of General or President, and for some time hesitated what one to take. Mrs. Lynch and a few others who shared his confidence advised him then and there to have himself declared Emperor, and assured him that such a step would secure to him the sympathy, if not the support, of the monarchical governments of Europe. But Lopez, foreseeing that it would array against him all the republics of South America, wisely decided to defer it till he had proved to the world his ability to sustain himself against all his neighbors, and instead of Emperor took the title of Marshal, which was conferred upon him by an act of the Congress. "The most excellent General of Division, Citizen Francisco Solano Lopez, is hereby appointed Marshal of the armies of the Republic, with all the exemptions, pre-eminences, honors, privileges, and salaries which are inherent in this supreme military grade." As nothing like the office or title of Marshal had ever been known before in Paraguay, the members of the Congress that passed this act had probably no idea what honors, privileges, or salaries were inherent to it; and it mattered little to them what they were, as they knew that no law which they could pass could make Lopez more absolute, either as civil magistrate or military ruler, than he already was. The Congress also passed a law providing for the appointment of three generals of division and six brigadiers; but only one general of division was ever appointed, and those who were promoted to be brigadiers during the five years of the war, with two exceptions, were subsequently executed by Lopez as traitors or conspirators. The other most important acts of the Congress were one approving of the declaration of war against Brazil, and one authorizing Lopez to conduct the war at his own discretion, and to



make peace whenever and under whatever conditions he might judge proper. Another act, the precursor of many like it, though less official in form, was passed, ordering the presentation of a magnificent set of jewelry and a sword of honor to the Marshal at the national expense. And, finally, an act authorizing a loan of twenty-five millions of dollars for the expenses of the war, — which loan, it may be here said, was never made, as the money was not needed for use within the limits of Paraguay, since Lopez could take everything there at his own price in the paper money of the country which he could increase at pleasure, and no serious attempts were ever made to float the loan in Europe.

A proposition made in the Congress during the last days of the session, on which no formal action was taken, will serve to show how completely the whole body was controlled by Lopez. The Minister of the Interior, Don Mariano Gonzales, announced that the President was desirous of establishing some mode of rewarding such persons as might render important services to the country, and that he proposed, therefore, the creation of an "institution of premiums." The proposition was, of course, unanimously approved, and the minister was requested to submit the project for such an institution to the Congress. No further action, however, seems to have been taken on it by that body, but after its adjournment it was officially announced that the Marshal President of the Republic was authorized to create and establish an order of merit for the object of rewarding eminent military and civil services, and that the whole matter was referred to the President himself, in the following terms: "The organization, composition, designation of grades, and other ordinances, will be established by the President of the Republic; also the President will confer the titles and decorations." On the 29th of April, 1865, the foundation of the order was officially announced. In its details it was in imitation of the French Legion of Honor, and provided that it should consist of five grades, Knight, Official, Commander, Grand Official, and Grand Cross; that they should all be for



life, and could only be forfeited after sentence of a competent tribunal, and that the President only could confer them. It provided that the decorations should be of different kinds, according to the grade conferred, and also declared who were eligible to the higher grades. For the highest, or Grand Cross, that citizen should be eligible who, by a vote of the national Congress, had been elevated to the Presidential chair, and the President should be *ex officio* chief of the order. Besides the President, no one in Paraguay was eligible to this highest grade, except the head of the church. It could not be conferred on any foreigner, except an hereditary or life sovereign. The other grades could all be conferred at the will of the President on such natives and foreigners as he might think worthy of the high honor.

The creation of this order was regarded by the foreigners in Paraguay, and was doubtless intended by Lopez, as a step towards the establishment of a monarchical government. It could not be conferred on the President of another republic, nor on any other foreigner except a sovereign for life, so that however exalted might be the name or fame of any person not an hereditary sovereign, he could never receive the Grand Cross of the Paraguayan National Order of Merit; and the object which Lopez had in limiting it to crowned heads could have been none other than that, when the war should be over, and he should have established himself as the Emperor of Paraguay, he could interchange with the different sovereigns of the world their respective orders. Had the people of the other republics of South America and of the United States at the time fully understood the ulterior object in establishing this order, it would very likely have disabused them of the idea that Lopez was carrying on war in the interest of republicanism and against monarchy, and all those aspirants for presidential honors in both South and North America would have learned that, however successful they might be in their own countries, and whatever dignities or titles they might there acquire, yet, not being sovereigns for life, they could never be eligible to the Grand Cross of Paraguay.



## CHAPTER IV.

Birth and early Education of F. S. Lopez. — He enters the Army. — Brigadier-General. — Personal Appearance and Habits. — His Cowardice. — His House of Shelter. — His Fright at a Distant Shell. — No Respect for old Friends or former Mistresses. — The Fate of Pancha Garmendia. — Carlos Antonio Lopez's Improvement on Francia's System of Espionage. — Ignorance and Superstition. — Juan Gregorio Urbieto, Bishop of Paraguay. — His Successor, Manuel Antonio Palacios. — Character of Palacios. — The Catechism of San Alberto. — The Divine Right of Kings and Magistrates. — Letter from Palacios to Lopez. — The Padre, Fidel Maiz. — His Talents and Popularity. — Arrest, Imprisonment, and Torture. — His Reconciliation with Lopez. — His Profane Confession. — His final Escape.

FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ was born July 24, 1826. His early years were passed at the family homestead of his mother, near the Trinidad, a league and a half from the capital. Francia being at that time in absolute authority, there were no public schools, and only those parents whose means would permit them to send their children to private teachers received any education. The Lopez children, however, all learned to read and write in their childhood ; and after Carlos Antonio was elected Consul, Francisco Solano attended the school of Juan Pedro Escalada, in the capital, for about a year. After this he received an appointment in the army, and soon after was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general, the highest grade then known in the Paraguayan military service. At the time of the campaign of Corrientes, in 1845, when he led his army across the border, he was but nineteen years of age ; and after his return he was so devoted to pleasure and the gratification of his passions that he made no attempt to supply the defects of early education. He may be said never to have read anything. His knowl-



edge of history was less than that of most New England school-boys at the age of fifteen.

He was, however, apt to learn, of quick perceptions, and must have had naturally an excellent memory. He was early taken into the counsels of the President, and the only ideas of government of both were those that had been learned from Francia. The old man had seen that the Dictator had governed absolutely through his system of espionage, and the young man, while yet a boy, learned that art to perfection. Hence his mental training was all in that direction, and having a retentive memory, he learned with great facility all the details respecting the family of every man in the country whose position or influence made him worthy of attention. By the continued exercise of these faculties from boyhood he became wonderfully expert as a spy, and managed, through his numerous agents and informers, to learn all about the private affairs of the principal people in the country.

In person he was short and stout. His height was about five feet four, and, though always inclining to corpulency, his figure in his younger days was very good. He dressed with great care and precision, and endeavored to give himself a smart and natty appearance. His hands and feet were very small, indicating his Indian origin. His complexion was dark, and gave evidence of a strong taint of Guarani blood. He was proud of his Indian descent, and used frequently to boast of it. As he could not pretend to be of pure Spanish blood, he would rather ascribe his swarthy color to a mixture with the Indian than the negro race. Hence he was as prone to talk of his Indian ancestry as ever were the descendants of Pocahontas. He also had many of the tastes peculiar to the savage. Before going to Europe he dressed grotesquely, but his costume was always expensive and elaborately finished. He wore enormous silver spurs, such as would have been the envy of a gaucho, and the trappings of his horse were so completely covered with silver as to almost form a coat of mail. After his return from abroad he adopted a more civilized costume, but always indulged in a gorgeous



display of gold lace and bright buttons. He conversed with fluency and had a good command of language, and when in good-humor his manners were courteous and agreeable. His eyes, when he was pleased, had a mild and amiable expression; but when he was enraged the pupil seemed to dilate till it included the whole iris, and the eye did not appear to be that of a human being, but rather of a wild beast goaded to madness. He had, however, a gross animal look that was repulsive when his face was in repose. His forehead was narrow and his head small, with the rear organs largely developed. He was an inveterate smoker of the strongest kind of Paraguayan cigars. His teeth were very much decayed, and so many of the front ones were gone as to render his articulation somewhat difficult and indistinct. He apparently took no pains to keep them clean, and those which remained were unwholesome in appearance, and nearly as dark as the cigar that he had almost constantly between them. His face was rather flat, and his nose and hair indicated more of the negro than the Indian. His cheeks had a fulness that extended to the jowl, giving him a sort of bulldog expression. In his later years he grew enormously fat; so much so that few would believe that a true photograph of his figure was not a caricature. He was very irregular in his hours of eating; but when he did eat, the quantity he consumed was enormous. He was a gormand, but not an epicure. His taste was for rank and greasy food, and the dishes he preferred would have repelled a delicate taste. His drinking was in keeping with his eating. He always kept a large stock of foreign wines, liquors, and ale, but he had little discrimination in the use of them. He, however, drank enormous quantities of them all, and was altogether so gross and sensual in his habits as to be a very uncomfortable patient for his physician. His excesses were constantly bringing on ill-turns, and at last brought on a chronic infirmity that must have soon ended his days, had he not perished by a lance. Though he habitually drank largely, yet he often exceeded his own free limits, and on such occasions he was



liable to break out in the most furious abuse of all who were about him. He would then indulge in the most revolting obscenity, and would sometimes give orders for the most barbarous acts. When recovered from such debauches he would stay the execution of his orders, if they had not been already enforced. But it was so dangerous for his subordinates to hesitate in their obedience, that, when he came out of his drunken fits, it would generally be too late, the victims would be already executed.

Of the three most noted tyrants of South America, Francia, Rosas, and the second Lopez, all have been distinguished for one quality, that is, personal cowardice. Francia, as we have seen, was in such perpetual fear of his life that he kept himself constantly surrounded by a guard, and imagined that an assassin lurked behind every bush or wall or building he passed. Rosas was a notorious coward. Many instances in which he showed the most craven fear are well known to the older residents of the Plata. But the cowardly nature of Lopez was so apparent, he scarcely took pains to conceal it. He never exposed himself to the least danger, when he could possibly avoid it. He usually had his head-quarters so far in the rear that a shot from the enemy could never reach him. At Paso Pucu, however, the allies got in his rear, and so invested his entire camp that at rare intervals a stray shot or shell would fall in the vicinity. But it was very seldom anything of the kind occurred, and nobody was ever hit within many yards of his house. Nevertheless, such a thing was possible, and he therefore had another house built close adjoining the one in which he lived, surrounded on all sides with walls of earth at least twenty feet thick, and with a roof of the same material so thick that no shot or shell that might light upon it could ever penetrate deep enough to do any damage. While all was still along the enemy's lines, Lopez would bravely remain in the adjoining house ; but so surely as any firing was heard in the direction of the enemy's nearest batteries, he would instantly saunter out in feigned carelessness, trying hard to disguise his fear, and slink into his hole, and not show his face



again outside until the firing had ceased. For several months before the abandonment of Paso Pucu, however, the firing from different points of the allied lines was so frequent that Lopez seldom ventured out of his cave. He ate and slept, protected by the thick walls of earth, and from within his dark abode issued his orders to his army ; and at the very time that he was thus hid away from danger, he had his correspondents for the *Semanario* around him, writing the most extravagant



LOPEZ LEADING HIS LEGIONS TO BATTLE.

articles in praise of his valor, his sacrifices, and his generalship. The people of Paraguay could never pay the debt they owed him, who, while they were living in security and abundance, was daily leading his legions to battle and exposing his life to constant danger.

His utter lack of courage was known to the whole army. In his youth he had been accustomed to ride on horseback a great deal, and had learned to ride well ; but after he became



older and stouter he rode but little, and always on a very tame horse and at a very moderate pace. His timidity was such that he did not dare to walk the gangway plank of a steamer unless he had a trusted officer on each side to save him from falling into the water ; and his short steps and frightened look, as I have heard them described by certain Englishmen who had seen him on such occasions, were enough to put to shame a nervous old woman of fourscore.

In the latter part of the year 1866, before the bomb-proof house at Paso Pucu had been erected, Lopez with his staff was out one morning inspecting his camp. The allies had been firing irregularly all the morning, but as Lopez was out of the range of their line of fire, and beyond the reach of their guns, no one had suspected any danger. As the party was quietly riding along, a shell that had overshot its mark fell at a distance of about three quarters of a mile from the party, and as it struck exploded. Instantly Lopez turned and galloped away at a speed he had not been accustomed to for years, and his staff, as a matter of course, followed him. They knew it would have been construed as worse than treason for them to show less fear than their chief. Unfortunately, the broad hat of the bishop was caught by the breeze created by its owner's flight, and went sailing through the air, and was left to be picked up afterwards by a soldier. This sorry exhibition of fear in the face of so many of his officers afterwards caused him great mortification ; and as so many had witnessed it that the facts could not be suppressed, he had an article published in the *Semanario*, abusing the allies roundly for their barbarous way of making war. Among civilized and gallant nations it was a point of honor never to fire in the direction of the king ; and this act of the allies in firing towards his Excellency the Marshal President was therefore unchivalric, treacherous, and cowardly.

In the gratification of his passions and in the accomplishment of his ambitious plans, he was no respecter of persons. Of those most in his confidence when the war began, and who were supposed to be his personal friends, nearly all



were subsequently tortured and put to death by his orders. Among these were Fernandez, Bishop Palacios, and Generals Barrios and Bruguez, his two most successful generals. His brother-in-law, Bedoya, was treated even worse, as he expired under the torture.



MISTRESSES OF LOPEZ. — From Photographs.

His treatment of his best and at one time most trusted officers was in keeping with that of his former mistresses. The favorite before his visit to Europe, by whom he had one or two children, was a young woman by the name of Pesoa, from the Villa del Pilar. She was a sister of the wife of Polycarpo Garro, a leading merchant of Asuncion. She was, however, driven into the cordilleras, and was exposed to the most terrible hardships, and, it is supposed, perished of want and exposure. Garro, her brother-in-law, was arrested, starved, and tortured as a traitor till he expired, July 15,



1868, as appears by Resquin's diary. After the advent of Madam Lynch, though she was understood to be the favorite, yet Lopez still kept up his relations with some of his old mistresses, and was frequently adding to the number of his conquests. The latest addition to the long list, at the time of my arrival in Paraguay, in 1861, was a tall and rather fine-looking young woman, daughter of Pedro Burgos, judge of the partido of Luque. As this was during the Presidency of the elder Lopez, some of the foreigners thought it strange that a man in her father's position would permit such an arrangement. He did not object, however, and the young woman continued occasionally to visit the house of Lopez until he left for Humaita in 1865 ; and her father was rewarded for his acquiescence by being arrested and taken to head-quarters, where he experienced the same treatment as Garro, and died on the 17th of August, 1868. The fate of the woman is unknown to me. She may have expired like a hundred thousand others in the wilderness, or may have been one of those unhappy wretches whose sufferings had been such that, on being rescued from the power of Lopez, the very instincts of modesty had been almost destroyed.

Poor Pancha Garmendia, the daughter of one of Francia's victims, and who for her resistance to the infamous proposals of Lopez long before he became President was doomed to see her brothers sacrificed to his wrath and to bear a life of persecution and seclusion, had perhaps a worse fate than the thousands of others who starved to death. She was dragged or driven along as a prisoner in the train of Lopez, and kept alive apparently with no other motive than that she might bear the floggings that were almost daily visited on her once fair and round, but now emaciated and shrunken shoulders.

To a perfect despotism a system of close espionage is indispensable. Such a system was established by Francia that he was able to repress every symptom or sign of discontent or disaffection. But he did not carry it so far that he could tell the innermost thoughts of his subjects,—thoughts that they dared not express to their most intimate friends, or even breathe them aloud to the winds. Carlos Antonio Lopez



x improved on this by adding the power of the confessional to his other enginery of power. The priests were all required to confess to him, or rather to reveal to him all the secrets that they could draw from the penitents who confessed to them. They were particularly charged to question those who confessed in regard to matters of a political nature, and learn what were their sentiments towards the government. And of the secrets thus obtained the priests dared not make a false report to Lopez; for if by other means he learned that one of them had been deceiving him, the father confessor was treated with no more consideration than a common thief.

Paraguay, from its first settlement, never departed from the "age of faith." Neither doubt nor free thinking in regard to spiritual affairs ever perplexed the people, but in all religious matters they accepted the words of the fathers as the unquestionable truth. Unfortunately, the priests were, with scarcely an exception, lazy and profligate. It was little shame to a priest to be credited with a numerous progeny among his parishioners. Yet the people were so superstitious and credulous they feared to disobey them or reserve anything which they might be required to confess. Nevertheless, from the system of vicarious punishment that was adopted, people would sometimes, to save their friends, postpone confessions that would affect their families till they believed their final hour had come; and then they feared to reserve anything. Such occasions were taken to extort from them their real sentiments towards Lopez, his family and his government, and also to learn the feelings of all those most loved whom they were to leave behind them. On information thus obtained the President would persecute in various ways such as had ever ventured to repine under his despotic rule; and so well aware were the better class of people of this power over them that they tried to repress, and refused to acknowledge to themselves, all feelings of resentment or discontent. Though they did not attribute to Lopez the supernatural gifts they had ascribed to Francia, they knew that he had a means more effective than the Dictator ever possessed for finding out, sooner or later,



their innermost thoughts. When Francisco Solano Lopez became the head of the government, he had this terrible machinery of power over the minds and thoughts of his subjects ready fitted to his hands. As subordinate to and in the confidence of Carlos Antonio, he had learned how to effectually use it.

The Bishop of Paraguay at the time of Francisco's election as President, Juan Gregorio Urbieta, was very old and infirm. He was a simple-minded, inoffensive man, who had spent a great part of his life in reading the works of the early Fathers, and never pretended to question the right of the government to render his spiritual functions entirely subordinate to the temporal authority. In his later years he had little to do except to officiate at high mass on public occasions, leaving all parochial measures to the suffragan bishop, Manuel Antonio Palacios. The latter for some time previous to the death of Carlos Antonio was the most confidential friend and adviser of the young Francisco, and continued so for several years afterwards. He was consecrated in the latter part of the year 1862 as suffragan bishop, with the right of succession as bishop when a vacancy should occur. He had been recommended to the Pope for this office by the elder Lopez at the solicitation of the younger, for no other reason, so far as was known, than that, of all the priests in Paraguay, he was the most abject and servile flatterer of the heir expectant. His education was very limited and his appearance sinister and forbidding. He was never accused of a good act, and had the credit of always advising the most sanguinary measures and the most cruel treatment of prisoners, both natives and foreigners. Yet he had considerable volubility, and on formal occasions, when his Excellency was in attendance, had the honor of preaching before him. His sermons were the blindest blasphemy, and entirely devoted to the praise of Lopez, and to instructing the people in their duties towards him. Lopez having been set over them by God as their ruler, it was their duty to devote their lives, their labors, and their fortunes to him, to count nothing a sacrifice that he might



require, as for all they did to exalt and strengthen him they would be rewarded, both in this world and in the life to come.

A few months before the death of Bishop Urbieta, a pamphlet was published as coming from him, that was intended to impress on the people similar ideas of their relations to Lopez to those which Palacios preached in his sermons. It was a modified copy of a work called the Catechism of San Alberto, Bishop of Tucuman, first published in 1784, and was intended to instruct people on the "principal obligations that the vassal owes to his king and lord." The doctrines of this catechism are such as were held by crowned heads three hundred years ago, but which no monarch of the present age would venture to avow. The king is declared to rule by Divine Right, and under no circumstances is the subject to know any other rule of action but unquestioned implicit obedience to royal authority. A bad king and a good one are to be obeyed with equal respect and deference, and the innocent man condemned to death should not only submit to his fate without a murmur, but mount the gallows and adjust the rope around his own neck with cheerfulness and alacrity.\*

\* "The state by its organization cannot tolerate nor leave unpunished offences, especially those which tend to annihilate religion, which has, since its happy union with the state, become its first fundamental law. . . . The prison, then, exile, forced service, the scourge, confiscation, fire, the scaffold, the knife, and death in whatever form, are penalties justly put in force against the disobedient vassal. . . .

"Q. Is the vassal obliged to accept and suffer the penalties?

"A. Yes; for they are just and ordained by law.

"Q. Is he bound to execute them himself?

"A. Yes; except the gravest or those of a capital kind.

"Q. And must he aid indirectly to execute even these?

"A. Yes; to show that he accepts and suffers them patiently.

"Q. What is meant by aiding indirectly?

"A. To mount the scaffold to be hung, or bare the throat to the axe if beheaded for crime."

[In the Introduction to the Paraguayan edition, it is noted that "teachers will take pains to explain to the children that in the word *king* every supreme magistrate is comprehended." The old Bishop Urbieta adds a charge to all priests, teachers, parents, and other citizens, in which he declares that God has inspired the supreme government with the idea of reprinting this treatise.]

"Q. May the king impose laws upon his vassals?



The inculcation of such doctrines was a part of the preparations for war and for the new empire, and was carried on *pari passu* with the importation of arms and the increase of the army. The people in their innocence and ignorance were taught to believe that anything like defection was an unpardonable sin, and that if they perished in executing the orders of Lopez they would pass at once to a state of unending bliss. Among the papers taken by the allies after the defeat of Lopez at Lomas Valentinas, in December, 1868, was found a letter written to him by the bishop, and dated at Paso de la Patria, November 24, 1865. That no one may think I have exaggerated in portraying the character of Lopez and his bishop, or in representing the base uses that were made of the confessional, I give an extract from this remarkable letter : —

“ I feel, excellent sir, great satisfaction at seeing that all my communications have been agreeable to your Excellency. The love of Christianity and true patriotism which has been developed in this

“ A. Yes ; for God has given him legislative power over them.

“ Q. Can he impose laws which shall be binding upon their consciences ?

“ A. Yes ; according to the saying of the Apostle : ‘ Be ye subject, not only for fear of wrath, but also through conscientious obligation.’

“ Q. That laws may be binding, is it necessary that they be generally known ?

“ A. No ; for in that case they would rarely be binding, as it is not easy for them to reach the knowledge of all.

“ Q. Must the promulgation of the laws be made in all the cities of the realm ?

“ A. It is not necessary, and it is enough if it be done at the court or another customary place.

“ Q. For laws to become binding, is it necessary that the people accept them ?

“ A. No ; for that would be to govern according to their own will rather than by that of the sovereign.

“ Q. When the law seems burdensome, what must the vassal do ?

“ A. Obey, and humbly prefer his petition.

“ Q. Is it a sin to murmur against or speak evil of kings and magistrates ?

“ A. Yes ; for God says : ‘ Thou shalt not murmur against thy Gods, nor curse the Prince of thy people.’

“ Q. What kind of a sin is it ?

“ A. A mortal one, if upon a serious subject ; or venial, if upon a light matter.

“ Q. Does he who speaks evil of his ministers speak evil of the king ?

“ A. Yes ; for they are his envoys and represent his person.

“ Q. Whom does he despise, who expresses contempt for the king or his ministers ?

“ A. He despises God, who says : ‘ He who despises you despises me.’ ”



division will, when the time comes, make all the soldiers fight with such self-abnegation and heroism as will enable us to save the country and triumph over our enemies. With the desire to excite this spirit, and with much success, we are continuing our pastoral labors with all possible care and force, omitting no measure or diligence, using the power and influence of the Holy Religion, whose representation and ministry have been confided to us by God among this chosen portion of the flock of Jesus Christ of our dear country, with the end of directing it in the path of justice, good order, and patriotism. It has been with no small difficulty, excellent sir, that we have labored with a people so unwarlike as ours ; but happily this difficulty we have now overcome and made to almost disappear by the words of evangelical truth, and by means of the confessional, in which daily we are engaged confessing hundreds of soldiers, disposing and fortifying them for the struggle, and making them to understand with the greatest clearness, that those who give their lives in the combat for their country will be recompensed and eternally rewarded by the Eternal Creator, according to those words of St. Paul, 'Reposita est mihi corona justiciæ quam redet mihi dominus.' All this inspires us with the strong belief, that, although the enemy may appear with a greater and more powerful array, still it will only be necessary to animate our troops, who, by their secure confidence in God, will certainly prove superior in force and valor, as says and affirms the soldier King, who was fashioned after the will of God, 'Non timebo milla populi circumdantis me.'"

The priest who enjoyed more of the respect and confidence of Carlos Antonio and of his wife than any other at the time of the old man's decease was the Padre Fidel Maiz. He was then at the head of the college at which the candidates for orders were educated, and it was supposed he was to be the bishop to succeed Urbietta. He was the trusted friend and confessor of the Lady President, and was considered a man of spotless character. He was the only one of all the priests in Paraguay, so far as I had any knowledge of them, who was respected for his morality. He was about the age of Francisco Solano, and was early distinguished for his application and scholarship. The old President respected him for his talents, learning, and correct deport-



ment, and the old lady for his piety. His superiority to the other youths of Paraguay provoked very early the jealousy and envy of young Lopez. His mental accomplishments, however, were not so offensive to the heir apparent as his physical advantages over him. He was tall and graceful, with a fair, open countenance, whereas Lopez was short and stout, with features that were neither handsome nor agreeable. Padre Maiz was the favorite confessor of the venerable *madres* and the young *señoritas*, and Lopez was jealous of his popularity with them.

On the death of the old President, Padre Maiz was immediately arrested, thrown into prison with heavy fetters on his ankles, and subjected to other most cruel indignities. He was kept in solitary confinement with a sentinel at his door, who threw him his coarse food as to a wild beast. The charge alleged against him, as published in the *Semanario*, was that he had taught heretical doctrines to his pupils. Many other priests were arrested about the same time, besides several of the leading citizens of Asuncion, and all thrown into prison ; and soon after it was given out by those who were understood to speak by authority, that Padre Maiz had been detected in a conspiracy to have himself elected President instead of Francisco Solano Lopez. He was subjected to a very long military trial. The tribunal before which he was arraigned was presided over by General Wenceslao Robles, and the principal prosecutor was Bishop Palacios. The proceedings were all secret, but no one doubted that Maiz was horribly tortured, as his confessions, or the reports of them that were put in circulation with the government approval, were such that nobody believed them. It was said that this priest, who had been considered so immaculate, so pure in his walk and conversation, was the greatest hypocrite and libertine in Paraguay, and that when brought before the tribunal he confessed that for many years he had been given up to debauchery, and had been the first to lead astray scores of innocent young women. The verdict of the tribunal was never made public ; but as the govern-



ment was at such pains to establish his infamy, no one supposed he would ever leave his prison alive. Yet he was permitted to live till long after the war commenced, and was afterwards taken to the army head-quarters at Paso Pucu, where he was treated with more humanity, and after a time was permitted to make confession to the President, and ask his forgiveness. What his real offence was, no one knew. The conspiracy laid to his charge was believed to be, like the conspiracies of Francia and the elder Lopez, invented as a pretext for putting obnoxious people out of the way, and the people were never informed of the heretical doctrines which he taught his pupils. Lopez had now begun to tire of the sycophancy and subserviency of Bishop Palacios. The war was not progressing favorably, and the bishop, Madam Lynch, Colonel Wisner, and others who had been most ardent in advising him to begin it, were very much out of favor.

About this time Padre Maiz was permitted to make a long written confession to the President, which was published in the *Semanario* of December 1, 1866. In this he does not confess to any specific charge, or tell what particular crime he had committed. Probably at the time of his arrest he was unconscious of having committed any ; but torture such as Lopez knew how to inflict, as we shall have frequent occasion hereafter to show, could extort confession of crimes before unthought of. After the publication of this document Maiz seemed, greatly to the disgust of Palacios, to regain the favor of the President very fast. He had supplanted the bishop by his idolatrous confession, by his blasphemies that were enough to make an atheist shudder.

I make no apology for the long extracts that I give from this remarkable confession.

#### “EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE.

“ ‘ Be ye thankful.’ — *Colossians* iii. 15.

“ Would that I might consign to an eternal oblivion the sad antecedents of my grave and numerous political and moral faults,



which brought upon myself the avenging action of the law and the just indignation of the offended people, so as not to renew along with their recollection the fatal ideas of so great aberrations and such shameful enormities. . . .

“But it is not possible; they are, and will be, publicly known until the latest generation. Let it be so! It is just! . . .

“Prematurely possessed by the pernicious and perverse ideas of a false and gilded liberty, which is really only license or insubordination and the unchaining of all the passions, . . . victim of those most odious principles of dissolution and detestable systems of a fictitious liberalism which amount to nothing but the ignoring or practical negation of all respect and obedience to the constituted authorities, . . . the natural effects of these things were in me very visible and alarming.

“Disordered affections, vanity, envy, evil inclinations, ambition, pride, error, and vice governed me even without my knowing it, and inclined me forcibly to irreligion, to libertinism and moral relaxation; so that my heart and my understanding remained profoundly vitiated, and, so to speak, radically perverted in the very morning of my existence.

“Unhappy wretch that I was! how could I have avoided it? It was impossible; the first guides of my spirit, — I mean those charged with my education and training, those authorized to instil into my soul the sound principles of social science, which defines for man his rights and duties, and the pure morality of the eternal Gospel, which conducts man, through the faithful fulfilment of his obligations toward God its ultimate end, to make me happy, not only in time, but in eternity, — it was precisely *they* who caused me to drink at the fountain the fatal principle or fundamental root of all my aberrations, misfortunes, and miseries, the lack of respect to the Supreme Authority, disaffection towards my country and its government, and hatred of the laws which form the basis of the political administration of the Republic, regarding them, even without knowing them, as retrograde, anti-liberal, and tyrannical.

“Who could bring me forth from such a deplorable state? How could a stop be put to those indefinable aspirations of my heart, and cut short my wild chase after the madness of the age? None but the very God of Heaven, — none but FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ, who occupies His place upon earth. . . . Only He was able to call to



me with his sovereign voice, as to another Lazarus: *Come forth!* . . . only He (Lopez) has known how *not to break the bruised reed, and not to quench the smoking flax*; . . . only He has been able, finally, *to convert me from the error of my way, to save my soul from death, and cover the multitude of my transgressions.*

“Who but a FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ, full of mildness and suavity, and employing with the most surprising skill all the resources of the most intimate knowledge of the human heart, — of the most consummate knowledge in all branches of science, whether religious and moral, historic and social, philosophical and juridical, canonical and civil, sacred and profane, — could cause that *where sin abounded grace should much more abound, that as sin reigned to death, so also may grace reign through justice to eternal life?* . . .

“O the grace! the ineffable grace of my pardon and liberation! How can I esteem it or even admire it sufficiently? . . . There are no examples in history, there are no images in nature, there are no colors in art, there are no figures nor flowers in rhetoric, adequate to describe and appreciate this most singular grace as it really is, and its reality can only be believed by considering the amazing magnanimity of soul, and the actions, all of them so rarely and wonderfully glorious and noble, of him who has granted that pardon.

“Let us pray continually that his precious and never-to-be-replaced existence may be spared for ages and cycles of ages. Let his immortal Name resound unceasingly from our lips; let his glorious image abide forever at the bottom of our hearts; let his august Person be the entire object of our contemplations; let us think in Him, think with Him, think by Him, let us not sleep, let us not wake, but under the sweet and vivifying influence and under the beneficent and refreshing shade of FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ, who is so justly the glory, the honor, and the joy of his country, its only and entire hope.

“Full of gratitude, of respect and love, let us venerate, applaud, and exalt this prodigiously Divine Being, this Guardian Angel, this Anointed of our people whom the Lord has given us in pledge of his divine paternal protection, and of that adorable Supreme Providence which watches ever for the preservation of innocent and in-offensive nations like Paraguay, to insure their happiness.



"Saint Bernard used to say he had no pleasure in reading or in conversation unless the name of Jesus were perpetually used ; that Jesus is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, and joy in the heart. I do not hesitate to say as much, for my own part, concerning him who holds His place among our people. . . .

"Ah ! FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ is for me more than for any other Paraguayan a true Father and Saviour ; and for the same reason he is also for me very especially the only object of the new affections of my converted heart. May He deign to look ever propitiously upon his *prodigal son* prostrate at his feet.

"FIDEL MAIZ.

"ENCAMPMENT OF PASO PUCU, November 17, 1866."

After making this confession, Padre Maiz succeeded in gradually supplanting the bishop in the esteem of the President, until at last he had the satisfaction, some two years later, of seeing the consecrated representative of the Pope led out to execution and shot like a malefactor.\*

\* Padre Maiz survived Lopez, having been taken prisoner in the last battle of the war in which Lopez was slain. He probably can give more information than all other persons living in regard to many things that appear mysterious and utterly inexplicable to everybody else. He may perhaps explain why Lopez killed so many of those who were, as all supposed, his most faithful and able officers. He may tell, too, why he killed his brothers, and flogged and otherwise tortured his mother and his sisters. He may also possibly be able to tell whether or not Lopez ever believed in the existence of the conspiracy which he pretended to discover, and for alleged complicity with which so many hundreds were tortured and executed.



## CHAPTER V.

Departure of the Paraguayan Fleet from Asuncion. — Arrival at Humaita. — The English Engineer, John Watts. — Admiral Mesa. — The Battle of Riachuelo. — Confusion. — The Pilot of the Amazonas. — Defeat of the Paraguayans. — Rewards of Merit.

ON the 8th of June the Paraguayan fleet was ready for departure from Asuncion. The President himself was to go with it as far as Humaita, where he was to disembark, as he had caused his Congress to pass a resolution that he should not leave the country. The day was one of great excitement in the capital, and the whole population were on the bank of the river to witness the embarkation. It was known that the President was going away, and everybody knew that it would be construed into an unpardonable affront not to be present and show an interest in so great an event. The whole population was accordingly, from an instinct of danger, gathered near the river to witness the scene. It had been given out that the fleet would sail at three o'clock in the afternoon; but the morning had been taken up with a long mass in the church, and afterwards by a reception in the Palace, where all the military and civil functionaries paid their respects in turn, and so many addresses were made and answered that the hours passed by unheeded till it was nearly night. In the mean while, however, the troops that were to accompany the expedition, four thousand in number, were being embarked. This, with the facilities at hand, was a slow operation; and as most of them had friends and relations among the crowd, there was much leave-taking that still further delayed the embarkation. But as the twilight had begun to gather the President's carriage made its appearance, followed by several others in which rode the Vice-President, the government ministers, the members of the Marshal's staff, and



other noted characters. At a little distance from the mole they descended from the carriages; and the crowd falling back and opening the way, they marched in awful dignity and silence to the river, and were conveyed on board in funereal grandeur. Some slight attempts at a cheer or *viva* were made, but I never yet heard a Paraguayan attempt a cheer that he did not "back recoil, he knew not why, e'en at the sound himself had made." Like Macbeth's amen, the *viva* always seemed to stick in their throats.

It was not till eleven o'clock that the fleet started; and before this hour the people had generally stolen off to their homes, tired and disappointed. The scenic effect that had been counted on was nearly all lost from over-punctilio: a bad omen, as it showed poor management and worse calculation on the part of the Marshal President, that augured but ill for the success of the expedition.

The fleet reached Humaita at four o'clock in the afternoon of the second day. On the way down the President called the chief engineer of the steamer on which he and his staff had taken passage, — the flag-ship Tacuari, — and so far condescended as to ask his opinion regarding the best way to attack the Brazilian squadron. The engineer, an Englishman by the name of John Watts, and an intelligent man, had formerly been employed in a similar capacity in the Brazilian service, and, knowing the character of the Brazilians, replied that, in his opinion, it would be an easy matter to take their entire squadron. His plan was for the Paraguayan vessels to run down near the enemy in the night, and just at break of day, as soon as they could be fairly seen, each Paraguayan vessel should select its antagonist, and run full head upon it and board it instantly. For this each Paraguayan vessel should have three or four times as many men aboard as the steamer it was to attack, and as the enemy would be caught with banked or extinguished fires, and probably most of the men asleep, their fleet would be destroyed and themselves prisoners before they could make any resistance. The President then asked if the Brazilians were as brave as the Paraguayans. The



engineer replied that they were not ; that naturally they were great cowards ; and that the Brazilian Admiral Barroso was one of the most arrant poltroons he had ever seen. Watts had been in the Brazilian expedition against Paraguay in 1855, and had seen how that whole squadron of nineteen vessels had been stopped at Cerrito by twenty-eight men, when there were no fortifications there, and that through sheer cowardice the design of the whole expedition was defeated. Only one steamer passed up to Asuncion, and then the elder Lopez managed to outwit the Brazilian Envoy, Leal, and obtain such delay in the settlement of the pending questions, that, when Brazil thought to renew her forcible attempts at adjustment, Humaita was strongly fortified.

The plan of the engineer was simple and feasible, and if followed would doubtless have been a complete success. But it was a defect in the character of the great Lopez that he knew too much, — so much that he could never receive a hint or suggestion from anybody. His own plan and what came of it we shall soon see.

The troops were disembarked at Humaita on the 9th, and on the 10th those who were to take part in the coming action were re-embarked. They consisted of some eight hundred men besides the crews ; and nine steamers, being nearly all that Paraguay possessed, were ordered to take part in the battle. Their names were as follows : Tacuari (flag-ship), Paraguari, Igurey, Marques de Olinda, Salto Oriental, Ipora, Peribebui, Jejui, and Ibera. The admiral of this squadron was Pedro I. Mesa, a man whose only merit was the one that would have commended him to Julius Cæsar, — he was fat. He had long been the flag-officer of the Paraguayan squadron, but he was as ignorant of naval warfare as a Guaicuru Indian. He was not only fat, but he was old and sick. He knew he was unfit for his position, and had desired to be relieved from it. But he was not allowed to retire, and was sent in command of this expedition. What his instructions were from the President is unknown, further than that they certainly were such as he attempted to follow, as he knew full well that anything short



of exact and implicit obedience could only be atoned for with his life. The plan of the battle should therefore be ascribed to President Lopez, though he never claimed it, notwithstanding his newspaper claimed a great victory.

At two o'clock on the morning of the 11th of June the fleet steamed away from Humaita, the Marques de Olinda taking the lead. With moderate haste it should have been at the Tres Bocas an hour later, but with an alacrity of slowness shown throughout the battle it did not reach there till 5 A. M. Here were in waiting six gunboats, or rather launches, each having on board a sixty-eight pounder, to be taken in tow by the steamers. It was half past six before the first boat got started again. But it had not been under way more than five minutes when the screw of one of the steamers, the Ibera, got out of gear, and all were signalled to anchor again. The engineer of the flag-ship was ordered to go on board and see what was the trouble with the disabled vessel. When half-way there, it occurred to the admiral that he wanted his own chief engineer to remain by his side, in case anything unexpected might occur. So he hailed him to return, and afterwards sent the engineer of the Igurey to report the damage. The latter accordingly went aboard the Ibera, and soon returned and reported that the screw propeller was detached from the shaft. The order was then given for the rest of the fleet to move on, leaving the Ibera behind. But so much time had been consumed by the pottering operations of the admiral, that it was half past seven in the morning before the fleet started again, so that all idea of a surprise of the enemy was abandoned. Had the Brazilians been anything else but Brazilians, they would have had pickets or spies on the lookout to give early notice of any such attack; but being such as nature and their lack of discipline had made them, they were lying idle and unprepared, till at nine o'clock in the morning the Paraguayan fleet was seen bearing down full upon them. The steam was not up on a single vessel, and for immediate action they were helpless as so many sailing vessels. The Paraguayans, thanks to their enemy's supineness, had surprised



them ; and each of the attacking steamers, having on a full head of steam, could have run directly at a Brazilian and cut her in two amidships. But the six launches in tow, with their sixty-eight-pounders, which the military genius of Paraguay had ordered to be attached as a drag to his steamers, so that no such sensible thing should be done, must be cast adrift if an attack of this kind were to be attempted. But the admiral did not dare to cast them off without orders, for he could not realize that success and a great victory would atone for disobedience. The Brazilians were anchored near the right or Chaco side of the river, in line of battle ; that is, one below the other, with the main anchor at the prow and a kedge astern, drawing the after part against the current and towards the middle of the stream, so that each steamer could give a broadside at long range to any vessel approaching from above. The fleet consisted of nine armed steamers, besides one small transport. They were generally of much heavier tonnage and had guns of much larger calibre than the Paraguayans, and for the latter to attack them except at close quarters would be either stupidity or madness. The commander of the Brazilian squadron was the same Barroso who, in 1855, had allowed his entire fleet of vessels to be stopped in the river below Humaita, at a time when that place had scarcely any fortifications and but twenty-eight men to hold them. Had he been advised that the Paraguayans were coming in time to get up steam, he would probably, as is to be inferred from his conduct in the battle, have run away with all his fleet ; but being surprised he could not do that, and as the enemy bore down towards him his vessels let drive their broadsides. Fortunately for him, the Paraguayans, instead of trying to run down his vessels, kept to the channel of the river, and labored to get below him, as if their object was to pass his squadron, and not to attack it. In doing this the Iguerey received a shot in one of her boilers that in its explosion caused the death of some twenty persons. The little Jejui also received a shot in her only boiler, and was left helpless to float down the stream. But with these slight injuries the whole fleet



passed by, and was just where it ought not to have been, that is, below the Brazilian squadron, and whence not one of them could ever return except through the fault of their adversaries. As they passed, the Paraguayans returned the fire of the Brazilians, but with little effect, as their guns were small, and, being in motion, their aim was wild.

They had passed the Brazilian squadron, and though two vessels had been disabled, one partially and the other wholly, none had been lost. They were below their enemies, and apparently entirely cut off from their own country. On the left bank of the river, just opposite to where the Brazilian fleet was anchored, the Paraguayans had previously placed a battery of flying artillery. This battery was under command of General Bruges, an officer of a different stamp from Admiral Mesa. He had seen the squadron pass with amazement, as if bent on its own destruction. He had placed his battery where it was, for the reason that he knew the Brazilian squadron, though lying in deep water near the Chaco, and at so long a distance that his guns could do them little injury, could not get into the channel below without going higher up to make a turn, and thence pass him within short range. But when he saw the whole Paraguayan fleet had gone below the Brazilians, he naturally thought that it was lost unless he could cover it or protect it with his artillery. He accordingly moved below with all possible celerity, and took a position that commanded the Riachuelo.

*Riacho* in Spanish means a little river, and *riachuelo* is the further diminutive, that means simply brook, or less than little river. About three leagues below Corrientes, one of these riachuelos enters the main river. Just below where it joins the main current is a bend in the river, and between the Riachuelo and the projecting angle of the bend there is formed a deep, broad basin, in which steamers of any size that can ascend so far have ample room to turn or otherwise manoeuvre. Just above this, dividing the channel, is, at low water, an island, and at high water a sand-bar. This point of the river, within the bend that forms the deep broad basin, is



called Riachuelo, and it was in or near this that nearly all the fighting took place.

After having passed the Brazilians, Admiral Mesa seemed to have no idea what he was next to do. He signalled all his steamers to stop where they were, and called on board the commanders of the *Igurey* and the *Marques de Olinda* to consult with them. He then went below with them, and might have stayed there an hour if he had not been hailed to his duty by his chief engineer, who told him that the Brazilians were getting up steam and would be down upon them shortly. The old man then said they must try and get back at night. The engineer, however, told him that would be fatal, as they could not turn where they were, and their only chance was to run for the Riachuelo, where they could turn and manœuvre so as to be in a position to damage the Brazilians, should they bear down upon them. The advice was taken, and the whole fleet moved to that point. The disabled *Jejuí* drifted of itself to the same place, and was afterwards taken in tow by another steamer.

The two fleets had thus apparently changed places. The Paraguayans, now below their enemies, were ranged so as to give battle to the Brazilians should they attempt to pass them. Barroso saw himself and his squadron between the upper and nether millstone. Why had those terrible Paraguayans gone past him, except to cut him off, capture his fleet, and take him a prisoner to share the dungeon with Carneiro de Campos? Evidently he was a lost man, and with a resignation commendable in some cases, if not in the present, he retired to his cabin to reflect on the mutability of human affairs. The fleet, however, having got the steam up, moved forward and turned downwards into the main channel and passed below, the battery of Bruges being already on its way to the Riachuelo to protect the Paraguayan squadron. The Brazilians, as they steamed down, delivered their broadsides at the Paraguayans, but with little or no effect. With one exception they all kept the outer channel, leaving the sand-bar above the Riachuelo on the left, and scudding by as if running a blockade, and not fighting a battle. Two steamers, however, attempted to pass



through the inner channel. Unfortunately, one of them, the Jequitinhonha, struck on the sand-bar, and was left helpless under the guns of Bruges, that were directly opposite. She was soon riddled and sunk. The other, the Paranahyba, passed the bar, but just below touched the shore; and, her stern being caught by the current, she drifted round, and, dropping down, came against the Tacuari, so that the two lay side by side. The Paraguayans, with instinctive courage, instantly boarded, while most of the crew of the Paranahyba, being under no discipline, jumped overboard. At the same time the Marques de Olinda came up on the other side of the Paranahyba, while the disabled Jejuí lay just below, so that with a single shot she might have disabled the rudder. But by this time the Paranahyba was covered with Paraguayans, and the commander of the Jejuí would not fire for fear of injuring his own people. There was, however, in the forward part of the Paranahyba a considerable number who had not jumped overboard, and who made so good a defence that the Paraguayan admiral got alarmed and attempted to go below. Descending from the bridge, he was just passing to his cabin when a ball struck him in the chest, and he fell mortally wounded. Just after this was heard the order of an officer of the Paranahyba to go astern. The next moment he was cut down by a Paraguayan sabre. The order, however, was obeyed, and the vessel slipped from between her adversaries. The admiral of the Tacuari being mortally wounded, and the next in command being dead drunk on the bridge, a lieutenant ordered her to move ahead. It was fortunate for her that she did so, for directly after the Brazilian flag-ship, the Amazonas, that had passed below, was seen returning at full speed, and, converting herself into a ram, was running down one steamer after another as if they were targets.

The Brazilian admiral, Barroso, after running the gantlet of the enemy and placing his vessel below so as to be at a disadvantage, as the Paraguayan admiral had just done, was again, like him, at a loss what to do. But two of the steamers were left behind, and it would not do to run away and abandon



them. The admiral, was too frightened to give an order. He sat in his cabin, literally paralyzed with fear and unable to speak. When appealed to by a subordinate to give orders to the fleet, he sat transfixed and speechless. The fleet, however, having got below again, turned about and came into position and steamed back among the Paraguayans. It was then that one brave man changed the fate of the day, and converted what would otherwise have been a shameful defeat into a signal victory. This was an Italian, the pilot of the Amazonas. Seeing everything going in favor of the Paraguayans and no one to give orders, he took the responsibility of acting without them. First he drove at the Paraguayri, one of the largest and best of the Paraguayan vessels. She went down like a cockle-shell before the huge Amazonas; then he drove at the Marques de Olinda; then at the Salto, and lastly at the Jejui, and each went down like ships of pasteboard. The launches, with the sixty-eight pounders, got adrift early in the action. Two of these were likewise run down by the Amazonas, and the other four fell into the hands of the Brazilians. Two of the Brazilian steamers gave chase for the Tacuari and the Igurey, the latter keeping in the rear to protect the other, that, being disabled by the loss of one boiler, could make but little headway. The pursuers could with difficulty keep in the rear of the pursued; so with true Brazilian pluck they closed their port-holes and prepared to defend themselves in case the Paraguayans should try to board them, keeping always behind, and firing their bow-chasers under such a sense of danger as did not permit them to aim near the mark. With a commendable prudence, therefore, they soon gave up the pursuit, though the commandante of the Igurey, Cabral, now flag-officer of the squadron, when arrived opposite Corrientes, came to and dropped anchor, as if to invite them to attack him. But with that better part of valor called discretion they declined to do so, and soon turned tail and returned to the vicinity of the flagship to celebrate, with Admiral Barroso, their great courage and great victory:



A great victory it was, but the whole credit is due to a subordinate of low grade, and that subordinate not a Brazilian, but a countryman of Garibaldi. Of the eight Paraguayan vessels that took part in the fight, four returned, all more or less disabled. That these were saved was due to an English engineer. This Englishman for his services received the lowest order of the Decoration of the Legion of Honor. But he was, not long after, for some slight offence, subjected to three months' imprisonment, and three years after was arrested, tortured, and shot as a traitor. The Italian pilot was rewarded by the Emperor with a present of five hundred gold ounces and the commission of lieutenant-colonel.

As an offset to this act of magnanimity and justice of the Emperor, it should be stated that his admiral, who had slunk in fear from the battle, was promoted to a higher rank in the navy, and was ennobled, being created Baron das Amazonas. It will be found hereafter, that, with scarcely an exception, whenever any officer high in position and authority in the Brazilian service disgraced his flag, his country, and himself by acts of cowardice or imbecility which in most countries would have caused him to be cashiered, if not shot, he was promoted and covered with benefits, and taken to his Majesty's bosom.

The Paraguayan admiral survived his wounds but a short time. Though he had conducted the battle very unskilfully, and shown personal fear, he had displayed less cowardice than Barroso. But had he lived his rewards would have been very different from those which his antagonist received. He would have been ignominiously shot, as Lopez himself declared, and as thousands of others were during the war, not often for cowardice, but for not doing what they had been ordered to perform. A miscarriage or failure in any enterprise could never be ascribed to the erroneous judgment or bad combination of the commander-in-chief, but the blame was always laid on the troops sent to perform it, and those who were so fortunate as to escape alive were afterwards remorsefully decimated and shot in the presence of their companions.



## CHAPTER VI.

Inaction of the Brazilians. — Results of the Battle of Riachuelo. — The Campaign in Corrientes. — General Robles suspected of Treason. — Espionage. — Colonel Alén. — Arrest, Imprisonment, and Execution of General Robles and Others. — The Campaign in Rio Grande. — Capture of San Borja by Estigarribia. — Battle of Arroyo Mbutuy. — Movements of the Allied Forces. — Critical Situation of Duarte. — Destruction of his Army. — Estigarribia summoned to surrender. — Negotiations. — Capitulation of Estigarribia. — His Character. — Treatment of the Prisoners. — Character of Robles. — Interview with the Marques de Caxias. — Reception of the News at Asuncion. — Disappointment and Rage of Lopez. — Public Meetings. — Evacuation of Corrientes. — Removing the Spoils. — The Brazilian Fleet. — Review of the Campaign.

THOUGH the result of this battle was a defeat to the Paraguayans and a loss of half their fleet, yet the Brazilians failed to follow up their success, which had they done, not one of the Paraguayan vessels would ever have returned to tell the tale of the great disaster. The Brazilians in this action, as in many others that occurred during the war, neglected to improve their victory, but seemed to think that, having repulsed the enemy, they had done all that could be expected of them, and that nothing further was demanded than to rest on their laurels and wait further orders and promotions from home. A slight attempt was made, however, two days after the battle, to recover the lost steamer, which was one of the best of the squadron, the *Jequitinhonha*; but the battery of horse artillery that hovered along the bank of the river, near where the battle took place, succeeded in driving back the fleet, and the *Jequitinhonha*, the *Paraguari*, the *Marques de Olinda*, and the *Salto* were left where they had been sunk during the action. So supine and demoralized did the Brazilians appear to have been rendered by the battle, that they moved down the river as if afraid of another attack.



The Paraguayans, did not thus abandon what they had lost, as the Brazilians were hardly out of sight when parties were sent down from Corrientes that took out the guns and whatever else was valuable which had been left on the Jequitinhonha and their own abandoned steamers, and they also succeeded in raising the hull of the burnt Paraguari and taking it to Asuncion.

This defeat at Riachuelo was an irreparable loss to Lopez ; it completely deranged all his plans. Had it been a success, and could he have captured the entire squadron, as under the circumstances it would have been easy to do had he conducted the battle with ordinary sagacity, he would then have had the entire command of the river from Asuncion to Montevideo. The allies had at that time nothing in the river which could have withstood the fleet that he would then have had at his command, and in the panic which would have followed the disaster to the allies he could have dictated almost any terms to the defenceless Buenos-Aireans. Such were his hopes, but this battle had destroyed them all, and it would be impossible for him ever to send another squadron against the Brazilian naval forces then in the river, that were being almost daily augmented.

But the attack on the squadron was only a part of his general plan. General Robles having occupied Corrientes for a time, as we have seen, was ordered to move down the left bank of the river as far as Goya.

Here he remained until the day of the battle of Riachuelo, when he commenced a retreat up the river as far as Empedrado, twelve miles below Corrientes, where he encamped and waited until the 23d of July. While here the Brazilians managed to open a secret correspondence with him, and he had made the preliminary arrangements to betray his whole force into the hands of the allies. Lopez, however, who mistrusted everybody, had spies to watch all his principal officers. The first letters he received in which corrupt propositions were made to him he immediately forwarded to Lopez, mistrusting that it was a device to entrap him, of



which Lopez, if he was not already informed, probably soon would be. But though these letters were sent forward to Lopez, he contrived to send answers to them, in which he intimated that he was none too good to leave the service of his chief, provided he were to receive due consideration for his treason. Lopez, up to this time, had had every confidence in Robles, as for a long time he had been next in command to himself in the army, and had been his favorite officer, had presided over his tribunals, had adjudged death to hundreds or thousands of obnoxious people, and owed his position entirely to the favor of his chief. But Lopez thought it well to watch more sharply his future conduct. He therefore promoted another of his favorites, Colonel Resquin, to be brigadier-general, and sent him to Corrientes, to be next in command to Robles. The person intrusted specially with the duty of watching the two generals was Colonel Alén, whose devotion to Lopez had taken that form which was most sure to secure him favor and confidence. He was his most favored and trusted informer, and was as zealous and eager to make accusations against others as if he believed that, by exciting the suspicions of his master against all his best men so that he would destroy them, he was doing him a great service. His zeal, however, as will be seen hereafter, did not suffice to save him from a fate worse, if possible, than that which he had brought upon many innocent persons by his accusations. Of the many victims of Lopez's suspicion and cruelty, perhaps none died a more miserable, agonizing death than did this same Colonel Alén. Having been sent with special orders to keep watch over Robles, he was not able to discover anything; but Madam Lynch, who had long regarded Robles with dislike, for the reason that he had too much influence with Lopez, thereby exciting her jealousy, had some spies of her own in a menial capacity around Robles's camp, and from them she was able to learn that something mysterious was passing between the general in command and the allies. She instantly made known her suspicions to Lopez, and besought him at once to have Robles superseded, and some one else, in whom both



had more confidence, placed in command of his army. Lopez was greatly alarmed at the earnest representations made by his mistress, who was then in Asuncion, and despatched a steamer with his brother-in-law, Barrios, to relieve the suspected general.

The latter was encamped at Empedrado, about a mile from the river ; and when Barrios approached with his staff to the tent of the commanding general, the latter came out to salute him. Barrios declined to return his civility, and delivered to him a letter from Lopez, which he told him to read. It was an order from him to turn over the command of his army to Barrios, with which Robles immediately complied, and delivered his sword to Barrios, who sent him as a prisoner on board a steamer ; his papers were then seized, and the disgraced general was sent under guard to Humaita. The evidence against him was intangible, and not satisfactory to Lopez, for he was not able to make out from it whether Robles was a traitor or not. He was kept in solitary confinement for a long time at Humaita, as were all the members of his staff, saving and excepting only Colonel Alén, whose fidelity to Lopez had not then ever been questioned. A large number of the commanding officers in the camp besides the staff were also arrested and put in irons ; and in this condition they were held for some six months, Lopez being unable to assure himself whether there was any just ground for complaint against any of them. On the 8th of January, 1866, however, he decided to have Robles executed, on the charge of not having done his duty in Corrientes. He was not condemned as a traitor, as it was not desirable that the troops should know that the two most trusted commanders of the great unerring Lopez had betrayed him.

Several of the staff of Robles were executed with him ; and among these was his secretary, Captain Valiente, the half-brother of Gumesindo Benitez, who afterwards figured as the acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the correspondence with the writer of this work, in which he endeavored to prove that the American legation was the focus



and head of a conspiracy against Lopez, and for which he received the reward which Lopez almost invariably granted to his most servile adherents,—torture and execution. Robles, dressed in full uniform, was paraded with his staff before the whole army, which was drawn up to witness the ceremony, and, the sentence being read, the fallen general, his secretary, and several others, were shot. Lopez witnessed this tragic scene from a window of his house. Most of the officers, however, who had long been in prison and in irons, were pardoned, and were restored to the positions they had held in the army. No one seemed to have any pity or sympathy for Robles, as he was a hard and cruel man, and had ever shown great alacrity in executing the commands of his unscrupulous master. He had always maintained the severest discipline in the army by inflicting the most terrible punishments for slight offences, either on officers or men. It was no uncommon thing for him to order officers of as high a grade as captain, and from the best families of Paraguay, to be unmercifully flogged in the presence of the soldiers. Nor was it an unusual thing for him to order any one who from thoughtlessness or ignorance had omitted the performance of any insignificant duty to be made a spread-eagle of, fastened to the ground, and left there, exposed to the scorching sun by day and to the winds, storms, and dews of night, for weeks and months at a time, or till they expired from their sufferings. His ambition seemed to be to please Lopez by imitating him in all things ; and wherever he was in command it was his habit to send to the houses of people in the vicinity and require the presence, at his camp, of any young woman that pleased his fancy. If the order were disobeyed, he would find means to enforce it ; and as he was known to be a great favorite of Lopez, no one would dare to complain of the outrage. After he was dead, people who, while he was in favor, would never have dared to breathe a word against him, spoke of him with the bitterness of hate which such cruelty was calculated to engender. Whether or not he had been guilty of treason to Lopez, they neither knew nor cared ; but they were glad he had met the fate that his other crimes so richly merited.



Lopez was beginning to realize, by this time, that the people by whom he was surrounded, and who had been accustomed to flatter him on all occasions, and to profess their willingness to sacrifice everything they had in the world to save him, did not, in making these professions, express their real sentiments, and that those who were most free with their praises and protests only lacked the opportunity to betray him. The state of mind he was in about this time may be inferred from the following extract from Colonel Thompson's book :—

“Lopez was continually in great fear of being assassinated, and at night had a double cordon of sentinels round his house. This was afterwards increased to a treble one. During the daytime these were removed, and the guard was kept under a roof, next door to Lopez. People who wished to see him had to wait under this same roof. One evening I was waiting there to see Lopez, as were also several other officers, and a sergeant of the guard entered into conversation with me. After a short time there was a great stir, officers going in and out of Lopez's room, the guard relieved, and the other officers who were waiting all arrested. One of Lopez's aides-de-camp came and said to me, ‘His Excellency sends word to you to write down all the conversation you have had with the sergeant of the guard and bring it to-morrow morning.’ I went away, not expecting to be able to remember a twentieth part of the silly talk of the sergeant ; but as things looked serious, I tried, and probably remembered it all. It filled a whole sheet of paper, and was all of it somewhat in this style : ‘The sergeant asked me if Queen Victoria always wore her crown when she went out to walk. The sergeant asked me if I should wear the Paraguayan uniform when I went to England.’ It was sealed up and taken next morning to Lopez, about 7 A. M. He was not yet up, but the sergeant was already shot, and all the soldiers of the guard had received one hundred lashes each. A few months afterwards I heard that the sergeant had been convicted of conspiring with two men who had just returned from Uruguayana to murder the President, and that the two men had been found that night in the yard of Lopez's house. The sergeant's manner that evening was certainly not that of a conspirator. Lopez never said a word about it to me, nor acknowledged receipt of the written conversation, probably feeling ashamed to do so.”



At the same time that General Robles was sent with his column of men along the bank of the river to capture the different towns on the route, Colonel Antonio Estigarribia, with a column of twelve thousand men and six guns, crossing the Parana at Encarnacion, a hundred miles above Paso de la Patria, marched across the Misiones to the Uruguay with the object of invading the Brazilian province of Rio Grande. On reaching the banks of that river he divided his army into two columns, crossing over with about eight thousand of his men, and leaving twenty-five hundred on the right bank of the river, under the command of Major Duarte. The two armies then proceeded down the river on opposite sides, and, on the 10th of June, Estigarribia took possession of San Borja after a slight skirmish. On the 26th of June a part of his force, while on their march, fell in with a considerable force of the Brazilians at Arroyo Mbutuy, and a battle ensued which both parties claimed as a victory. On the 5th of August, Estigarribia with his army occupied the important Brazilian town of Uruguayana. Though the Brazilians along the frontiers of the invaded province had two or three times the number of troops under Estigarribia, they made little or no effort to impede his march, as they saw that the farther he got away from his own country the more complete and disastrous must be his ultimate overthrow. Meanwhile Duarte, with his army of twenty-five hundred men, occupied the town of Yatai, on the Argentine or opposite side of the Uruguay. The combined forces of the two armies amounted to about ten thousand men, about two thousand having been lost on the route since they had crossed the Parana. By this time the allies began to gather around them in great force, and indeed in such overwhelming numbers that it was evident that without generalship peculiarly Brazilian the whole Paraguayan army would be destroyed or taken prisoners. Six hundred men under General Flores were approaching the camp of Duarte, who sent to Estigarribia for reinforcements. He received for a reply the insulting answer that, if he was afraid, some one else should be sent to command



in his stead. Hoping that General Robles, who had been despatched in the same general direction, might be near, he also wrote to him, advising him of the desperate strait he was in. In this letter, which was captured by General Paunero, Duarte says that his orders from Lopez were to kill all the prisoners he took. This letter, it should be noted, was written early in the war, and before Lopez had been rendered desperate by the reverses that subsequently overtook him, and proves how little value is to be attached to the professions made by him before the commencement of hostilities, that he should carry on the war with the strictest regard to the laws of nations, and with such respect for the dictates of humanity, that his conduct in this war should offer a striking contrast to that which had generally been the practice of the sanguinary *caudillos*, whose exploits had disgraced almost every page of South American history.

Flores's forces had increased so rapidly that on the 17th of August they numbered more than thirteen thousand men. He at once sent a summons to Duarte to surrender, which the latter refused to do, saying, as was almost invariably said at that time by every Paraguayan, when summoned to surrender, that he had no orders to do so from "El Supremo." An attack was then ordered, and in the battle which followed the Paraguayans fought with a valor never surpassed, not even at Thermopylæ. But the superiority of numbers was so overwhelmingly against them that their valor was of no avail. They all refused to surrender, but fought until they were killed, and of the whole twenty-five hundred only between two and three hundred of those who were not engaged in the immediate contest were taken prisoners. In this battle, as in many others, it would not unfrequently occur that one Paraguayan would be surrounded by a dozen of the enemy, all calling on him to surrender, to which he would make no response, but fight on until he was killed; or if by chance he was disarmed during the unequal contest and forcibly made a prisoner, he would take the first opportunity when his hands were free to seize a musket or bludgeon of any



kind, and kill as many as possible, until he was himself knocked senseless.

In this action the allies lost a number fully equal to the whole force of the Paraguayans, so that on the average every Paraguayan had killed his man. The allies now turned their attention to Estigarribia and his larger army, who were on the other side of the river, engaged in fortifying their position. As he saw that the troops of the enemy which were gathering around him were far in excess of his own, he commenced a retreat, which had he continued he might probably have saved himself and a part of his army. But he knew the character of his master too well to venture to retreat without orders, and therefore returned to Uruguayana to await instructions or reinforcements. Meanwhile four gunboats had been sent up the river by Admiral Tamandaré, which took a position so that their guns commanded the town. The question with the allies now was, whether Estigarribia would fight, as Duarte had done, until all his men were killed. Were he to do so, they might count on a loss equal to all, or nearly all, the Paraguayan army, and the moral effect of such another Thermopylæ could not but be disastrous to the allied cause. They therefore sent a note to the Paraguayan commander, proposing that he should surrender, and promising that he and his men should be permitted to retire with all the honors of war. Estigarribia replied to this note in a long letter, declining to entertain any such proposition. The allies soon after sent him a second letter, in which they represented that their troops greatly outnumbered his, and they had such superiority of artillery that he was completely invested by land, while he was exposed to the heavy guns of the squadron which was lying near by in the river. For him to make resistance under such circumstances, when victory was impossible and defeat inevitable, would be to sacrifice his entire army to certain destruction. It has been said, that, at the time this letter was sent, another communication of a different character was also forwarded, in which Estigarribia was promised ample rewards if he would not subject the allies to the losses and



inconvenience of a battle, and that an arrangement was then made, according to which he was to answer scornfully the proposal that he should capitulate, and keep up the appearance of defiance, till the Emperor, who was then on his way, should have time to come up and be present at the surrender.

To the summons to surrender, Estigarribia replied, on the 5th of September, in a letter the terms of which are so grandiloquent and inflated as to create the impression that at the time it was sent he was already resolved on capitulation.\* This letter was not written by Estigarribia, but by a priest who accompanied him to write his letters and act as chaplain. Estigarribia was a man of little ability and no education, and would never have been selected for this important command had Lopez been either a good judge of men or of the qualities essential in the commander of so desperate an enterprise. He had been known in Asuncion as belonging

\* "VIVE THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY!

"CAMP AT URUGUAYANA, September 5, 1865.

"*The Commander-in-Chief of the Division in Operation on the River Uruguay, to the Representatives of the Vanguard of the Allied Army.*

"The undersigned, Commander-in-Chief of the Paraguayan division in operation on the river Uruguay, has the honor to reply to the note which your Excellencies addressed to him on the 2d instant, proposing the basis of an arrangement.

"Before entering upon the principal part of your Excellencies' note, I may be allowed to refute, with the decency and dignity of a soldier of honor, all those statements in said note which are injurious to the supreme government of the undersigned. With the permission of your Excellencies, such statements place that note on the same level as the newspapers of Buenos Aires, which for some years have done nothing else and have had no other object than grossly and severely to blacken the government of Paraguay, throwing out at the same time rude calumnies against the people, who have replied to them by honestly laboring for their domestic happiness,—their greatest delight being in maintaining internal peace, which is the fundamental base of the preponderance of a nation.

"As your Excellencies show so much zeal in giving the Paraguayan nation its liberty, according to your own expressions, why have you not begun by freeing the unhappy negroes of Brazil, who form the greater part of its population, and who groan under the hardest and most terrible slavery to enrich and keep in idleness a few hundreds of the grandees of the Empire? Since when has a nation, which by its own spontaneous and free will elects the government which presides over its destinies, been called a nation of slaves? Doubtless, since Brazil has undertaken the affairs of the river Plata, with the decided desire of subjugating and



to the staff of Lopez, and as being one of the most ready and willing to commit any barbarity or enforce without mercy any tyrannical order that his master might command. His family was of the lowest class in Asuncion, and he had no other stake in the country, and was altogether such a man as, having nothing to lose, would be open to propositions from any source.

These brave words were not followed up by corresponding actions; for no sooner were they written than he began to stipulate for terms to himself, in case that he would surrender his whole army. But the allies, not knowing, or at least pretending not to know, what his ulterior purposes were, began to make active preparations for assaulting the place. They had four times the number of troops that he had, besides their gunboats; they had also forty-two rifled cannon of longer range than those possessed by Estigarribia, so that they could

enslaving the sister Republics of Paraguay, and perhaps even Paraguay itself, had it not counted on a patriotic and foreseeing government.

"Your Excellencies will allow me these digressions, since you have provoked them by insulting the government of my fatherland in your note.

"I am not of the same opinion with your Excellencies, that a military man of honor and a true patriot should limit himself to fight only when he has a probability of conquering.

"If your Excellencies open any History, you will learn, from the records of that great book of humanity, that the great captains whom the world still remembers with pride counted neither the number of their enemies nor the elements they disposed of, but conquered or died in the name of their country. Recollect that Leonidas, when he was keeping the Pass of Thermopylæ with three hundred Spartans, would not listen to the propositions of the King of Persia; and when a soldier told him that his enemies were so numerous that their arrows darkened the sun, he answered, "So much the better, we will fight in the shade." Like the Spartan captain, I cannot listen to the propositions made by the enemy; for I have been sent, with my companions, to fight in defence of the rights of Paraguay; and as its soldier I must answer your Excellencies when you enumerate to me the number of your forces and the amount of artillery at your disposal, 'So much the better; the smoke of the cannon shall be our shade.'

"If fortune should decree us a tomb in this city of Uruguayana, our fellow-citizens will preserve the remembrance of those Paraguayans who died fighting for the cause of their country, and who, while they lived, did not surrender to the enemy the sacred ensign of the liberty of their nation.

"God preserve your Excellencies many years!

"ANTONIO ESTIGARRIBIA."



knock down the town and destroy every Paraguayan in it without exposing themselves to any danger. It was a situation well calculated to display Brazilian courage in all its perfection, as no braver troops were ever known than they are when beyond the reach of danger. But while the allies were getting ready to make this attack, the provisions in the camp of Estigarribia were getting very low. The army had eaten up all the horned cattle, and had commenced upon the horses, and Estigarribia saw that, unless he could escape from the trap into which he had fallen, he must either surrender, or else his troops must all perish either in battle or from hunger. He therefore sent another note to General Mitre, proposing to treat for terms. Mitre, however, seeing that he had him completely in his power, did not reply to his letter, reserving that task until he should be ready for a general assault, when his answer would be a summons to an unconditional surrender. This was done on the 18th of September, the whole allied army being in position for an attack. Mitre now sent a summons to Estigarribia to surrender within four hours. The latter replied, offering to surrender on condition that the rank and file should be treated as prisoners of war; that the officers should be allowed to keep their swords and go wherever they liked, even to Paraguay; and that the Orientals in his army should be prisoners to Brazil. These terms were accepted, with the exception that the officers were to give up their swords, and might reside wherever they pleased, except that they should not return to Paraguay. The formal surrender was then made, and the whole army, consisting of nearly six thousand men (some two thousand having died from disease or want, or been killed in the occasional skirmishes that had taken place), were marched out as prisoners of war.

The treatment of these prisoners by the allies was not only a violation of all the laws of war, but was in every respect treacherous, dishonest, and disgraceful. They were drafted into the allied armies and compelled to fight against their own countrymen, brothers in arms. This act was not only a crime, but it was a great mistake. The Paraguayans, when



they left their country on this invading expedition, believed that they were going to fight an enemy who had come to make war upon their country and carry them away, to distribute their women among the soldiers and carry off the men as slaves to Brazil; and they had been trained to such implicit obedience, and were so thoroughly subject to the orders of their superiors, that with this fear before them they could be made to fight in a manner more desperate and fearless than was ever known before. It was long after they had been taken prisoners before they became disabused of the idea that they were finally to be taken to Brazil as slaves, and that they were never to see their homes, their wives and children again, unless by deserting they could make their way back to their own country. Many of them did so desert, and found their way back to the camp of Lopez, where, for a while, they were received as true men, who had been betrayed into the hands of the enemy by their commander. As they had not been long enough in the Brazilian army to lose their hatred of the Brazilians, or to become disabused of the idea that they were going to be made slaves of, they were nearly all again drafted into the army.

It is asserted that Estigarribia had, previous to his surrender, made terms with the Brazilians, by which he was to receive a very large sum of money in case he would lay down his arms without forcing the allies to the extremity of a battle. It is certain that he was treated by the Brazilians with great consideration; that he went to Rio de Janeiro, where he was treated with great distinction; and that he had the means to support himself in a style such as he had never known before. His annual salary under Lopez had not been as much as were his daily expenses in Rio de Janeiro after his surrender. No one but Lopez could blame him for having surrendered as he did, for had he held out as did Duarte his army must have shared the fate of his subordinate. Yet Lopez had been well pleased with the battle of Yatai; for he thought that, though the whole army had been destroyed, it would show the allies that the people



whom they were to encounter were resolved to perish to the last man sooner than be conquered. Should Estigarribia imitate Duarte and his army, and make as good a report of himself as they did, then the allies would hesitate long before venturing to encounter another Paraguayan army. But when the news of Estigarribia's surrender reached him, he saw that he had not only lost his army, but that he had shown a great want of generalship by sending so large a force away from his base and leaving it to be cut off and captured, and he had lost all the moral advantages that had been gained by the army of Duarte. The news of this surrender, coming so soon after the defeat at Riachuelo, rendered Lopez for a time as savage and furious as he afterwards became in his general character. He had lost a great part of his fleet that was to have swept the river and brought the cities of Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Rosario, and Parana as supplicants to his feet ; and he had lost the whole army that he had intended should carry fire and sword through the Brazilian camp, and even bring the Emperor to sue for terms. His rage on this occasion has been described as having been very undignified for the chief magistrate of a nation. Gathering all his principal officers, he broke forth in curses and maledictions of Estigarribia as a traitor, a purchased knave, whose name and memory were deserving of universal execration. He then turned upon those present, and in terms of the most bitter invective told them that they were all traitors to a great extent ; that none of them had his cause and his person so much at heart as they ought to have it ; that he should watch them more sharply than he had ever done before ; and that they might count that at the least defection, the least sign of disobedience or disinclination to carry out his orders to the fullest extent, they should feel his heavy hand upon them in such a way that they could never fear it a second time.

The wrath of Lopez against Estigarribia was greatly aggravated by the fact that he had escaped from his power, and was then rioting on the rewards of his disobedience. He had not even the poor consolation of inflicting vicarious punish-



ment on his family, for he had no family but a wife that he cared nothing about, and who was low and abandoned. Notwithstanding this, however, she both renounced and denounced him, and petitioned the government for leave to change her name, and not be longer known or called by one that her husband had made infamous. Having done this, she was allowed to remain at large, while the families of others who had deserted or proved recreant, if they had the misfortune to be respectable and possessed of property, were stripped of all they possessed and sent into exile in remote and destitute places of the interior.

In regard to the treason of Robles, Lopez was for a long time in doubt. The whole Corrientes expedition had proved a miserable disastrous failure, and, as Estigarribia had escaped, Robles must suffer for the shortcomings of both. His fidelity was suspected, and yet nothing could be proved against him. This fact Lopez confessed more than a year after, under the following circumstances. The writer of this work had just returned from the camp of the allies, where he had several interviews with their commander-in-chief, the Marques de Caxias. On these occasions the Marques was very free in boasting of his great resources and of his ability to ride over and destroy the army of Lopez whenever he should choose to do so. He evidently wished all he said to be repeated to Lopez, with the object of convincing him that he was irretrievably lost. He boasted that he knew the position of every gun in Lopez's camp and the number of troops at each point, and directed his principal engineer, a Pole, who had been in the American war on the staff of General Grant, to give me a plan of Lopez's camp, with its defences and connections, so that on showing it to Lopez he would see that Caxias was not speaking at random. He also boasted that he found no difficulty in obtaining information from within the Paraguayan lines, and said that he had numerous spies and informers there. He stated that the disastrous attack on the island near Paso de la Patria had been all arranged previously by Mitre and the Paraguayan commander, Romero, by which the lat-



ter was to be taken prisoner and all his command also taken or killed. He declared that if Robles had not been arrested for two or three days longer, he and his whole army would have been taken at as cheap a rate as had previously that of Estigarribia. It struck me at the time as very singular that the commander-in-chief of an army should speak thus openly and boastingly of the means he employed to corrupt his enemies and induce them to turn traitors. There was, however, probably, an object in it. He did not affect to tell me anything in confidence, but, on the contrary, said that I might tell Lopez everything; his object as I supposed being to impress upon him that his cause was lost, and he had better give up the contest without further bloodshed.

When I related to Lopez what Caxias had said of the treachery of Robles, I had no suspicion that he had executed him while in doubt of his guilt. But in his reply he admitted that such was the fact. He said he was greatly relieved and gratified by what I had told him, as it was the first information of a positive character he had ever received that Robles was a traitor. Caxias had, however, denied that Estigarribia was a traitor. He said that he had only surrendered under such circumstances as would have justified any military man in surrendering, and that it would have been folly, madness, and crime for him to have resisted against odds so overwhelming; that his army must have been entirely destroyed in case it had not capitulated. Lopez still refused to admit that Estigarribia was not a traitor equally guilty and base with Robles. It was his idea that it was the duty of every soldier of his army to fight with all his men until every one was killed rather than to surrender, for by doing this they could inflict injury on the allies, and thereby help his cause; and so that his cause was aided, Lopez did not consider that a general or soldier had any right whatever to consider his own life or that of his fellow-soldiers as worthy of a thought.

The news of the surrender of Estigarribia, when it reached Asuncion, caused great dismay, and public meetings were held to denounce his treachery and cowardice. But while



the escaped traitor was denounced and stigmatized by every possible epithet that could be found either in Spanish or Guaraní, those who reviled him felt it incumbent upon them, or at least prudent, to praise the great strategy of López, who had sent him on the expedition with a large army that must inevitably be lost if his orders were obeyed. In the *Semanario* he was likened to as many of the heroes of ancient times as the editors had ever heard of; and when the American, Mr. Bliss, suggested that the name of Cincinnatus should be added to the others, it was done, though probably not one of the readers, Paraguayans, had ever heard of Cincinnatus, and, if they had, would certainly have found it difficult to trace the similarity between him and López.

After these two great disasters, López saw that he could no longer maintain an aggressive war on foreign territory. If he would not have his whole forces destroyed, he must recall them within the limits of Paraguay and then fight on the defensive. He accordingly ordered the evacuation of Corrientes, and withdrew his troops. They had during the time of occupation descended along the banks of the river as far as the important town of Goya, which, with Bella Vista, Empedrado, and other places of less note, they had sacked, and had taken away everything that they could carry which would be of use to them in their own country. The chief wealth of the province of Corrientes, however, was the cattle; and General Barrios, who was in command after the arrest of Robles, deployed his army into a long line from the river, and, marching to the north, swept before him all the cattle and horses that could be found until they came to the Parana, where they were ferried over in steamers and lighters to the Paraguayan shore. While this was going on the Brazilian squadron was lying idle in the river, and doing nothing to prevent the Paraguayans from recrossing and taking all their plunder with them. The Paraguayan steamers that had not been destroyed in the battle of Riachuelo were actively employed in running up and down the river, and carrying away their artillery and the spoils which they had taken from the Correntino towns. As soon



as they had completed this work, and had evacuated first one town and then another, the Brazilian fleet followed on after them. They were careful not to pursue the game while the tracks were too fresh.

On the day that the Paraguayan army began to cross the river from Paso de la Patria to Itapiru, five Brazilian steamers came in sight of the place, and saw what was going on. The Paraguayans had two steamers to transport the entire army, and, had the Brazilians moved higher up the river, they could easily have destroyed them, and completely cut off the retreat of the Paraguayans ; but when they saw what the Paraguayans were doing, instead of attacking them they turned about and ran away. The allied army was coming up by land in number vastly exceeding that of the Paraguayans on the left bank of the river, and the Brazilians had it in their power to cut off their retreat, so that they must all have fallen into the hands of their enemies ; but the Brazilians, who, throughout the war, seemed to think that all the science and strategy in war was expressed in the proverb of a golden bridge for a flying enemy, did not think it expedient to destroy the only means of escape for the Paraguayans. Afterwards, when this fatal blunder was known and criticised, it was alleged that there was not sufficient depth of water for their vessels. That, however, was not the true reason. The river was at that time high enough for vessels drawing much more water than did any of this squadron. Another reason alleged, and the true one, was they did not know but that the Paraguayans had masked batteries which might injure their vessels. It was the imaginary masked battery of the Paraguayans that almost invariably prevented the Brazilians from following up a victory which they had gained. They chose rather to bear the ills of a longer war and other campaigns than the others that they knew not of in the form of possible masked batteries.

It was not till about the 1st of November, 1865, that the Paraguayans had all returned from the invasion of Corrientes. The campaign had been a disastrous one to the cause of



Lopez. Since it commenced he had lost the better part of his squadron and nearly twenty thousand men, and all he had got in return was the spoils taken from the towns he had sacked, and the cattle, more than a hundred thousand in number, which he had collected and taken across the river. These cattle were of little use to him, as, finding a poisonous plant in Paraguay to which they were unused, and which they ate, the greater part of them died in and about the Paraguayan camp, creating a state of the atmosphere so tainted as to seriously injure the health of the troops. In fact, it may be doubted whether it would not have been better for Lopez had every one of the cattle which had been collected in Corrientes been drowned in attempting to cross the river.



## CHAPTER VII.

A new Palace commenced. — Colonel Francisco Fernandez. — Lopez disappointed in his Efforts to form a Royal Alliance. — Madam Lynch. — Colonel Wisner. — Character of Lopez. — Public Amusements. — Balls. — *Peinetas de oro*. — Jewelry. — Sortija. — Bull-Fights — Their Influence upon the People. — Celebrating the Anniversary of the President's Birthday. — A Step towards Imperialism. — Changes in Matters of Etiquette and Deportment. — The Clothes Question. — General Illumination. — Triumphal Arches. — Mottoes. — Fulsome Praises of Lopez. — Demonstration by the Ladies. — Magnificent Displays. — Reception of the President. — Patriotic Speeches. — The President's Reply. — Government Officials present. — Their Subsequent Fate.

WHILE Lopez was indulging in the pleasing dream that he would have an imperial bride to share his throne, he began to build a palace, intending it to be fit for a princess. He selected as a site for this noble structure a point of land between the old Palace, or Government House, and the arsenal, overlooking the river and commanding a view to the west, north, and east. Part of the ground was unoccupied, and the rest was covered with the shanties and hovels of poor people, who knew better than to complain at being driven off. Its foundation was of limestone, and the work was massive and substantial. The basement fronting the river was intended to serve as a stable, and was as full of dark rooms, winding passages, and stairways, as any old feudal castle. It had a frontage of, if I recollect aright, two hundred feet, with a deep L running back at each end, leaving an open space for a court between them. Above the basement it was built of brick and covered with stucco, so that it had the appearance of stone at a little distance. The architect and builder were both Englishmen, and the work was done in a most substantial manner, and the general appearance of the building as seen at a distance was grand and palatial. The adjoining build-



ings being all small and inferior, they served to set off this massive pile in striking relief.

x The labor on this palace was nearly all done by boys from nine to twelve years of age. The stone had been quarried at a place called Empedrado, some ten leagues above Asuncion, and near the bank of the river. It was a sort of stone easily worked, and the young lads did all the labor of drilling, picking, and trimming it. To lift the large blocks, or to fix them in position, of course required the assistance of strong men; but the able-bodied men were nearly all conscripted for the army, and the master-builder, Mr. Alonzo Taylor, was obliged to depend on boys to do everything that they had the strength to perform. It was a sad sight to see the little fellows made prematurely old by the labor to which they were condemned. They were constantly watched that they should never idle away a moment; and in passing through the grounds where they wrought they appeared like worn-out slaves, in whom all hope was so utterly extinguished that they never looked up or ceased a moment from their labor. They had a starved and hungry look, for besides being so severely worked they were scantily fed. The poor little wretches were allowed only six or eight cents a day with which to buy their food. A bit of mandioca, or maiz chipa, not half so much as nature required, was all they could procure with this scanty pittance. The lads had been picked up with as little regard to the feelings, either of themselves or their parents, as has the slave-trader on the coast of Africa for the mother whose children he steals. They were taken from their homes and set to work as slaves, and continued at it till they were sent to the army to be there sacrificed.

The superintendence of this building was given to Colonel Francisco Fernandez, who was the general agent and confidential business man of Lopez in all his private affairs. He was, of all Lopez's officers and subordinates, the best liked by the foreigners. He was believed to have more of the confidence of his master than any other man in the country, and would take on himself the responsibility of granting favors or giving



orders on unimportant matters that would have cost others imprisonment and fetters, if not their lives. His was the task of keeping these boys at work, and such was his fidelity to his chief that he did not spare them. And he had his reward. He was tortured and shot. His wife and children were driven destitute into the wilderness, and where are they?

The work on the palace had not progressed far before the President's illusion of a royal alliance vanished into air. When this hope was gone, he seemed to surrender to the counsels of his Irish mistress, Madam Lynch. Her hopes and plans, that had long been held subordinate to the ambition of her paramour, now had a prospect of being realized. She purchased the houses and lots on a square adjoining the new palace, and openly talked of her purpose of building another, of almost equal magnificence, for herself. Her most trusted adviser was an old Hungarian refugee by the name of Wisner. Many years before, this man, for certain reasons, had left his own country and emigrated to Brazil. From there he passed over into Paraguay and took service under the elder Lopez as a sort of civil engineer and architect. He was said to be of noble family, and he certainly was a man of most courtly manners and of considerable attainments. At this time he was nearly sixty-five years of age, and played the courtier to Madam Lynch by agreeing with her in all her ambitious schemes, and seconding her efforts to influence the mind of Lopez. They both clearly saw and realized equally with Lopez, that for him to declare Paraguay an empire before something had been done to make the world know there was such a country would be absurd and ludicrous. Wisner then began to argue, not only with Lopez, but with every one, that war was a necessity to bring out Paraguay; that she would never be respected abroad, or have any standing as a nation, till she had demonstrated her capacity to defend her rights and chastise her enemies.

Unfortunately for Lopez, though he had many flatterers, he had no advisers. At a very early period of his life he had



been placed in authority over all who were about him, and these had soon learned that the way to favor and preferment was through adulation and flattery. Hence all flattered till he came to regard any one who might venture to express an opinion different from his own as an enemy; and when the question of war was discussed, those around him who had most of his confidence could never express a doubt as to what the issue might be without incurring his severest displeasure. Their own safety required that they should tell him he was invincible, and had only to lead his legions to battle and he would scatter his enemies like chaff before the wind; that they and the whole Paraguayan people so loved, honored, and revered him, they would all spring to arms at the first call, and deem it an honor too great for so unworthy subjects as themselves to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in following his banners. This was what he heard in private conversation; and the same ideas, with numberless changes, were the sum and substance of all the speeches pronounced in the public meetings. Every man of any influence or respectability was expected to join in and swell the chorus of praises; and if any one from inadvertence failed to do so, he was sure to get a reminder that his want of patriotism had greatly surprised his Excellency. A hint of this kind was never repeated. Anything like lukewarmness after that was sure to be punished by arrest, imprisonment, and fetters. Previous to the war such warnings were confined to Paraguayans; but subsequently nearly all the foreigners, before they were accused of the conspiracy for which they were executed, received notice that they did not, on public occasions, evince sufficient devotion to the cause of the government that protected them.

All history shows that it is not in human nature for a person to be constantly told that he is the greatest, wisest, and bravest of all mankind without in time coming to believe it. Such was the youthful experience of Lopez. While yet a boy he was placed in authority over people who had grown up under such a reign of cruel terror that they never questioned the



wisdom or the justice of any act emanating from the government. He was addressed by all, young as he was, in terms of obsequious obedience ; and it is, perhaps, not strange that in time he should regard their constant praises as his due, and himself as meriting all the attentions he received. To be constantly flattered became a necessity to him, and he came to look upon any one who failed to minister to his unnatural appetite for flattery, not only as an enemy to himself, but an enemy to the country that had all its hopes and glories centred in his person.

Considerations of this kind may indeed to some extent account for the strange perversity of his character in after life. Had he been so circumstanced in his youth as to have been brought in contact with others of his own age on terms of equality, he must have learned that, while he was superior in natural gifts to some and inferior to others, he was liable to err, and needed, like all men, to be assisted by the experience and counsels of others. Left, however, to the indulgence of a disposition naturally cruel, with no one to check or censure him, but encouraged by those around him to believe that all he did must be right, he developed into an unnatural character, in which all the evil passions known to the human race had full sway, entirely unrestrained by any sentiment of pity for human misery or respect for human life ; and even became insensible to the ties of consanguinity.

As a matter of policy it was always the custom of the first Lopez to render the people oblivious of their slavery and degradation by encouraging them to indulge in public amusements. Under Francia's reign, popular assemblages of all kinds were forbidden ; and when this restriction was removed by his successor, they thought it a great privilege, even under the closest surveillance of the police, to be permitted to meet, to dance, to race their horses, to tilt at the *sortija*, and to have public feasts and bull-fights. Several balls were accordingly given every year by authority of the government, to which only the better class of people were invited. Others of a more democratic character were given, generally in the open



air, in which all could participate. The occasions for these festivities were usually the anniversaries of the birthday of the President, the day of the patron saint of the capital, Asuncion, of the independence of the state, or of some other important event in the nation's history.

At all times of the year music was kept up at or near the barracks for several hours in the day. This custom existed in the time of the first Lopez. At three o'clock in the morning during the summer months, and four in the winter, the band would commence to play, and would keep it up for four or five hours without intermission. Towards evening the musicians were compelled to practise as many hours more. The band at the capital was very large, and the music was uniformly excellent, but the duties required of the performers on wind instruments were so severe that a great many young men were completely ruined in health by it. There was always music for any kind of a jubilee, whether it were a ball at the Club, a promenade through the streets, a serenade to Lopez or Madam Lynch, or a dance in the open air by the *peinetas de oro*.

The class of women called *peinetas de oro*, or golden combs, were of the poorer class, whose wealth consisted to a great extent in their jewelry. These women were not of the poorest class, but usually had some means of subsistence independent of menial labor, the most of them holding illicit relations with men who were engaged in business in the employ of the government. They constituted a very large part of the female community of Asuncion, and were less depraved and abandoned than women holding such relations usually are in other countries. Among their other jewels they have large old-fashioned shell combs richly mounted with fine gold elaborately worked into borders and flowers. Sometimes as much as three or four ounces of pure gold are worked up in the setting of one of these *peinetas de oro*. They were not, however, worn by the ladies of the higher class, and were never seen in the balls or other assemblages where the forms and customs of other countries were observed. This class frequently had



dances — or, as they were called, *tertulias* — at their own houses ; but in the times of rejoicing, as on national holidays, their performances were in the open air. In the later days of the Republic, balls for all classes were frequently given in the plaza in front of the Government House. On these occasions three distinct apartments would be fitted up for as many grades of people. The first would have seats around it and carpets covering the ground. In this apartment might be found the Vice-President, the Cabinet ministers, the Mayor of the Plaza and Chief of Police, and, of course, the better class of citizens with their wives and daughters. Besides these were the different mistresses of Lopez and his brothers. Next adjoining this apartment was another very like it, except that there were no carpets. This was for the *peinetas de oro*, such soldiers as had risen above the rank of a private, and artisans and others not of the class of peons. In this division, though



WATER-CARRIERS AND PEINETA DE ORO. — From a Photograph.



there were few of the female dancers that had not jewelry worth from three or four ounces to as many hundreds of dollars, yet the feet of every one were, and always had been, innocent of shoes. Men and women alike were barefoot. The next division was allotted to the poorest class, — to women who earned their subsistence by carrying water, by keeping little stands in the market, by domestic service, or in any way with little regard to decency or morality. The men that shared the dance with them were common soldiers, peons, or slaves. The three orders, however, all danced to the same music. The invitations to all were given by the police, and from them an invitation was an order. On one occasion our friends from Limpio, Anita and Conchita Casal, being in town,



ANITA AND CONCHITA CASAL.—From a Photograph.

went to view as spectators one of these out-door balls of the capital. They stood for some minutes at a distance, watch-



ing the scene, and hoping to escape observation. But the quick eye of a policeman observed them, and he asked them to enter the arena and join the dancers. They replied that they had not come to dance, but only to look on. "Go in and dance," said the patrol sternly, "or you go to the calaboose." This invitation was too strong to be resisted, and they went in, and with fear and trembling danced away till, seeing an opportunity to withdraw unobserved, they hied away like frightened deer.

Riding at the ring, or *sortija*, is an old Spanish amusement, and is practised in all parts of South America. Two upright posts are fixed in the ground about ten feet apart, with a cross-bar at the top some twelve feet from the ground. From this cross-bar a small ring of trifling value is loosely suspended, to become the property of him who, riding his horse at full gallop beneath it, shall carry it off on the point of his sword. There was always a band of music in attendance, that struck up a triumphant air when the feat was accomplished.

The festivities of all kinds were given on a more extensive and more expensive scale after the accession of the younger Lopez to power than they had ever been before. On the anniversary of his birthday next succeeding his election as President, the balls, bull-fights and races were kept up for a month. Just in the rear of the old palace, or *cabildo*, where had once been the channel of the river, but was now a broad level space, a circus, some sixty yards across, was built, with galleries some six feet from the ground running all around it, and commanding a view of the arena, which were divided into compartments, some of which were covered with cotton cloth to keep out the sun. A few of them were fitted up with curtains of bright and striking colors for the use of Lopez, his mistresses, his Cabinet ministers, officers and their families. The people seemed to enjoy these exhibitions and pastimes exceedingly, and turned out in vast numbers to witness them. As bull-fights, however, they were but burlesques on that barbarous amusement. The bulls, generally, were not bulls at all, but oxen, and so tame that they could hardly be provoked to rush



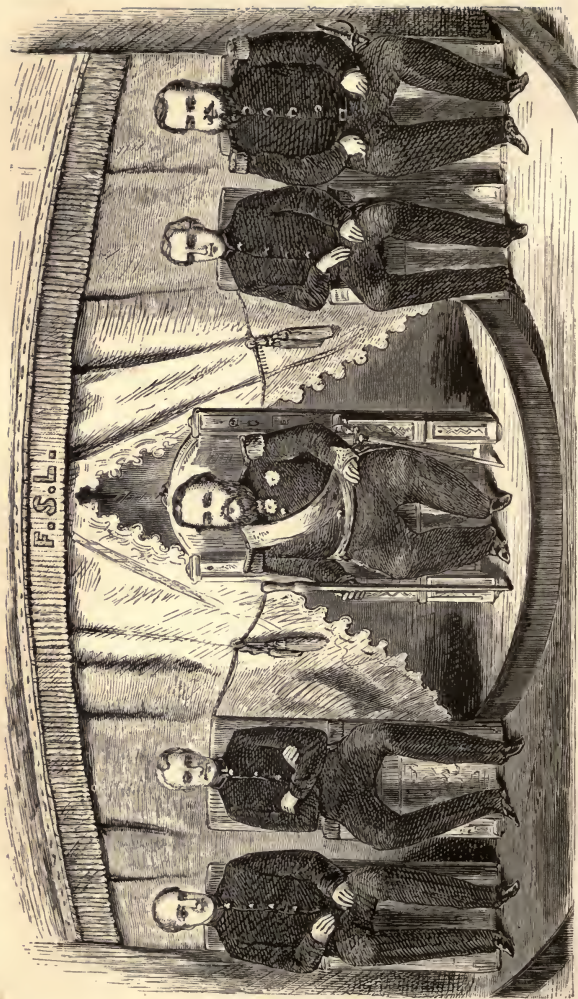
at the *picador*, or resent with any spirit his pricks and jibes. The multitude, however, enjoyed the sport of seeing the poor animals stabbed or goaded till some one of the *matadores*, more bold than the rest, would manage to plant his dagger in the neck just back of the horns, when the poor brute would fall quivering to the earth. At this feat a shout would go up from the crowd, the entrance-way would be opened, and a man with a lasso would ride in and drag out the helpless beast, to be skinned and dressed, and his flesh given as food for the soldiers. Had it been the object of Lopez to brutalize his people, and to render them the willing instruments of the cruel acts that marked his subsequent career, he could have devised nothing to accomplish his object more effective than this. Neither courage nor agility were required in the arena when such tame cattle were to be tortured, and it would seem that there could be no object in such displays but to accustom people, young and old, male and female, to take delight in witnessing the infliction of pain.

The first of the balls given this year (1863), on the anniversary of the President's birthday, was held in the old Government House. This, as was customary, was given in the name of the officers of the army and navy. Though given in their name, it was at the government expense, as, with two or three exceptions, not one of the officers of high grade in the country could have raised fifty dollars without pawning his clothes. They had scarcely any salary, and being almost all of them taken from the lowest class, they had no fortune of their own. Their uniforms were furnished by the state, and were rich and elegant. For them to have given the ball and banquet on this occasion would have taken all their salaries for at least a year. But the great ball of the season was to be in the Club. A step towards imperialism was to be publicly made on that occasion. The dancing-hall was refitted and refurnished, and at the upper end, where the President and his ministers were accustomed to sit, a raised semicircular platform was erected. This platform was about twenty feet across, and had an elevation of about a foot from the floor. Upon









GONZALES.

SANCHEZ.

THE THRONE.—LOPEZ AND HIS CABINET.

BERGES.

VENANCIO LOPEZ.



this was placed another of about two yards across, and raised above the main platform some ten or twelve inches, and on this was a large arm-chair gorgeously trimmed with damask and gold as a seat for the President *in esse* and the Emperor *in posse*. At each hand, on the lower platform, stood two other arm-chairs, less richly decorated, for the Vice-President and the Cabinet ministers. Above, and directly over the head of the President of the Republic, was a semicircular frame, corresponding in size with the smaller platform below, faced with purple velvet about fifteen inches wide and with deep rich fringe pendent from it. Heavy damask curtains were draped so as to fall in the rear of the ministerial chairs, while wrought in gold in the broad velvet facing of the canopy overhead were the letters F. S. L.

About this time the word had been passed to certain officials that no one was ever to sit in the presence of his Excellency when he was himself standing. A hint to that effect from an officer in uniform was sufficient to insure obedience among Paraguayans ; but no official order was given to that effect, and the foreigners were not advised that for the future any such marks of homage would be required. They were left to be instructed when they should commit a breach of the new rule. Some Englishmen who had long been in the country were the first to offend. Never having been accustomed to observe, on previous occasions, whether the President was standing or sitting, they seated themselves in the lower part of the hall, not observing that the President was standing on the first step of the platform in front of the throne. They were quietly informed that it was not permitted to sit while his Excellency was standing, and before the next ball was given it was known among all the foreigners that respect for the President demanded they should never sit in his presence unless he was also sitting. Other signs of an intention to demand more abject obsequiousness than had before prevailed were also to be observed. Whenever the President was in sight, everybody was expected to be uncovered. The guard in attendance upon him was increased, and more formality in approaching



him was observed. Even then I saw that these changes in matters of etiquette and deportment were but preliminary to a change in the form of government, and I took pains to show my disapprobation of them by openly disregarding them. It may not have been diplomatic, and certainly was not courtier-like, but I took a sort of malicious pleasure, when everybody else in the room was standing, to sit in a conspicuous place, indifferent whether the President were standing or not. These offences were laid up against me, to be brought up years afterwards.

Another change in the etiquette of the court was introduced about the same time with the prohibition to sit while his Excellency was standing. At the balls, which the President honored by his presence, I observed that the dancers, in making up their sets for quadrilles, "lancers," or other square dances, formed them diagonally across the hall instead of in figures corresponding to the form of the room, as had always previously been the custom. When I asked, in my innocence and ignorance of imperial etiquette, what was the meaning of this innovation, I was told, in a whisper, that it was not proper for any one to turn his back on the President. Hence the figures were so formed that, when his Excellency was seated on the throne or standing in front of it, no one would be forced to the indecorum of standing with his back towards him.

These changes, that were understood by all to be but initial steps towards the empire, were made before the war commenced and while yet Lopez was at the capital. Two years later, on my return from the United States, I found that, under the direction of his mistress, the people were subjected to still more degrading observances. As Lopez could not be present at the public balls, a large picture of him was always placed in front of the throne, to which the same respect must be shown as to the great Lopez in person. The quadrilles must still be formed diagonally, as it was disrespectful for any one to turn his back on the picture of his Excellency. Whenever I saw this picture thus displayed as an object of reverence, if not of worship, I could not but think of Gesler



and William Tell. But the spirit of the Paraguayan people was so completely broken, that there remained no hope to them that a deliverance from their degradation could ever come from themselves.

The great ball of the 24th of July, the President's birthday, when the new throne was to be inaugurated, was announced as to be given by the citizens of Asuncion. It was intended to be the grandest affair of the kind ever known in Paraguay. It was destined, however, to be a dismal failure, and I fear that I was, unwittingly, the cause of it. To the court or official balls in Paraguay nothing in the way of a uniform or court dress had ever been required for admission. It had, however, always been the custom of the agents of foreign governments, diplomatic and consular, to attend in uniform. The invitations generally expressed on their face the object or occasion of the assemblage, and if it were to be a formal, official affair, to be attended by the President and his Cabinet, then people who had uniforms were expected to wear them. On this occasion, however, the ball was given by the citizens to testify their joy at the return of his Excellency's birthday. I therefore told my colleague (I had but one), the Oriental Minister, and the different consuls, that as I had received no notice that the ball was to be of an official character, and attended by the President or his Cabinet, I should assume the contrary, and go in citizen's dress. They all followed my example, though reluctantly, as from common report they all knew, and I knew, that it was intended to be not only official, but gorgeous and magnificent, and that his Excellency was to occupy the new throne for the first time. We accordingly all went in a body in plain evening dress. We arrived a little late, and not till after the President, having been seated on the throne for a while, had risen and was standing in front of it. Making our way through the densely packed company, we approached to make our bows, express our felicitations, and fall back to join in the dance or converse with the *señoritas*. As we approached, we could see that a scowl was on his face and that he was in a towering passion. To our salute he re-



turned but a grudging nod. The ball, which to that moment had been as lively and cheerful as usual when he was present, instantly became as sombre and chilling as a funeral. The dancers moved about in a manner as measured and solemn as though they expected the company was to be decimated for execution before morning. Our coming as we did had cast a shadow on the whole affair. The lack of a few brass buttons had ruined the ball. There was no mirth or hilarity after our arrival. The President left early, for his wrath was not modified, though some of the offenders sought to draw him into conversation ; but he would not be comforted. He had been touched in a tender point in his first open step towards monarchy, and he had no remedy. The parties who had offended him were not amenable to his power. After his Excellency had withdrawn, and the guests had partaken of the elegant banquet that had been prepared, they withdrew to their homes, anxiously expecting the developments of the next day. But the next day brought nothing new. On reflection, the President doubtless saw that he had made a silly and foolish exhibition of ill-temper, and thought the less said about the whole affair the more it would be to his credit.

A few nights afterwards another ball was given under similar circumstances. But, having been so rudely treated at the last one, we now determined to stand for our rights, and go in the same costume as when we had offended so grievously. On this occasion the President was as bland and courteous as I had ever seen him, and I took occasion to ask his Minister for Foreign Affairs, José Berges, why we of the consular and diplomatic bodies were not advised beforehand whether or not the various festivals to which we were invited were to be of an official character and attended by the President and his Cabinet. Such an important question as that he could not answer without orders, and therefore he deferred his reply till the next day, when he sent me a formal and verbose note in which, after a great deal of circumlocution, he said that in reply to my question of the previous evening he was happy to inform me that for the future he would advise me, on appli-



cation, whether or not any festival which I might be inclined to attend were to be of a formal and official character, and honored by the presence of his Excellency the President, and thus relieve me of any doubt whether I should go in uniform or not. To this I replied in substance, that it was not my business to go to him to inquire what clothes I should wear, but that it was his business, in sending out invitations, to advise their recipients of the character of the entertainment, and if that were done, I was disposed, in lesser things as well as in those of more importance, to conform to the usages and customs of the country whenever I could do so with propriety and self-respect. The reply to this was, that in future the Department of Foreign Affairs would advise the deans of the diplomatic and consular bodies whenever any festival, to which they might be invited, was to be of an official character and attended by the President and his ministers.

The *clothes question*, which has given rise to so much discussion between American ministers and the courts to which they have been accredited, was thus disposed of for the time in Paraguay. Lopez, however, was greatly ashamed of the whole affair. In this case he admitted himself in the wrong; the only time, probably, he ever did so in his life. He even went so far as to give another ball some time after, and to send notice to me and to the dean of the consuls that it was not to be an official affair, but that he should himself attend, though not in full uniform, and his ministers who were not military men would go in citizen's dress. He was greatly afraid that his boorishness at the first ball would be complained of by other governments. It was always his particular ambition to be thought a very pattern of deportment, and as far as possible removed from the rude manners of the gaucho or of his own Indian ancestors; and when, some months after, he learned that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, had absolutely refused to grant an interview to his *Chargé d'Affaires* in Paris, Don Candido Bareiro, he was for a time greatly concerned lest the reason of it should be alleged to be his own rude treatment of the French consul



and other representatives of foreign governments. The French consul, however, when questioned on the matter by Minister Berges, replied that he had thought so little of the affair at the time of its occurrence that he had never alluded to it in his despatches to his government. .

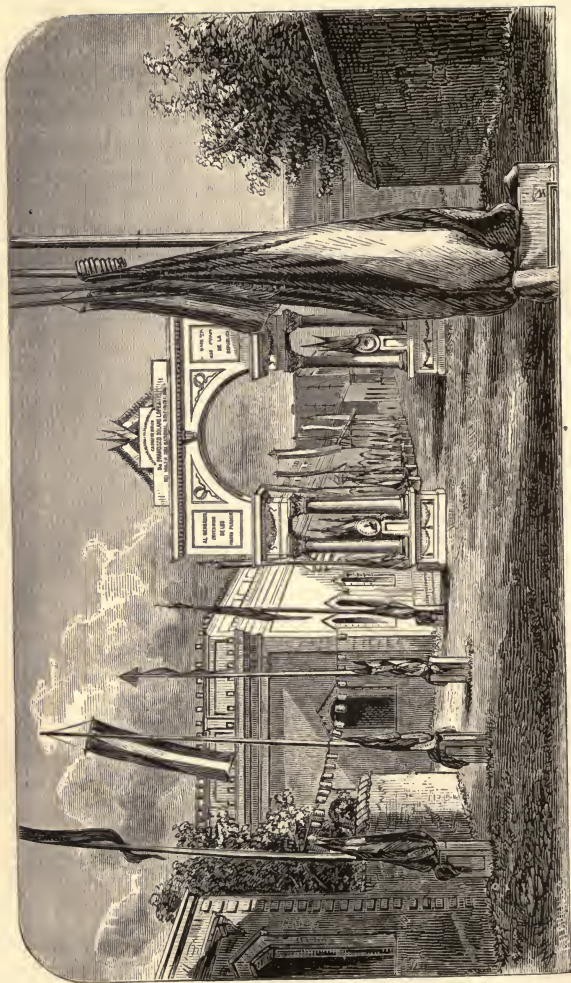
On the occasion of the next birthday of the President, the festivities were continued so long that a stranger would have supposed that balls and bull-fights, races, and tilting at the *sortija*, were the employments to which the people devoted themselves. The joyful demonstrations commenced with a grand ball given at the new railroad station, in which a large dancing-hall had been magnificently fitted up, and they were continued in one form or another from the 24th of July till the 10th of September. As many balls were given at the Club as there were different occupations of people. The citizens of Asuncion gave one, the members of the Cabinet another, the officers of the army another, and the officers of the navy still another. The merchants of the capital gave one; the foreign employees of the government gave one, and the judges another. It was expected that the same people would attend each of these, as whoever was eligible to one was eligible to them all. As a banquet was given at each of these balls, several days must intervene between them, and the intervening nights were given up to the *peinetas de oro* and the water-carriers. Night after night a great multitude was collected in the Plaza del Gobierno; and whether tired, or hungry, or sick, they must join in the dance and keep it up at least till the small hours of the morning. They must rejoice, they must dance and sing and shout, for they were celebrating the birthday of the great Lopez.

One peculiar feature of these festivities in honor of the President's birthday was the general illumination of the principal squares of the city. For several days before they commenced, a large force was set at work to decorate the city. Triumphant arches were erected in different places. These were of light framework, and covered with white cotton cloth, on which were displayed in large letters a great number of









TRIUMPHAL ARCH.



sentiments, all eulogistic of the great Lopez. The Club also was adorned with similar texts and mottoes, and paper lanterns by the hundred were placed along the street, each one of which had on it a sentence laudatory of the great hero. The ingenuity of the people in framing so many expressions on the same barren subject was wonderful. All the great and good qualities they had ever heard applied to any and everybody else were blazoned on arch or wall or transparency. Lopez, the great man, the unequalled warrior, the father of his people, the defender of his country, the great pacificator, the promoter of national progress, the champion of independence, the guardian of liberty, the dauntless hero, and every other form of flattery and adulation, were paraded in the streets through which his Excellency was to pass. But no word of honor or approval was ever permitted to any other living person. Occasionally there would be an allusion to the services of Don Carlos Antonio Lopez, but never was the name of any of his officers, no matter how great their services and sacrifices, allowed to appear in his newspaper or in any public place. So long as they lived he was jealous of them, but when killed in battle he had nothing more to fear from them, and he would order them great funerals, at which all who were able to do so were required to pronounce funeral orations, in which the dead were to be praised and honored for having fallen in sustaining the banners of the great, the daring, the matchless Lopez.

After every grade and class of people in Asuncion had shown their loyalty and devotion to Lopez by balls, games, and festivals of various kinds, it was announced that the ladies of the capital were anxious to manifest their patriotism and celebrate the birthday of the President. This was but the precursor of many other testimonials given by the ladies of the country to Lopez. They were all managed in the same way. Madam Lynch would first suggest to the wives of two or three foreigners who were trembling for their lives that such a demonstration would probably be acceptable to his Excellency, and the poor women would at once take the hint



that they must take the initiative in the matter or evil would befall them. They would accordingly go around and notify others that they were expected to take part and contribute to the expense. None would dare refuse, and hence such a demonstration was no sooner proposed than its success was certain.

On this occasion the hall of the Club was decorated with unusual magnificence, and the street from the President's house to the Club was a perfect blaze of light. A magnificent arch covered with mottoes expressive of the genius and merits of Lopez was erected between them, and the way on each side was lined with transparencies all testifying to his greatness. The hall was closely packed with the younger people of the best families in the country, and the young ladies were more severely taxed than they had ever been before, that their toilets might correspond with the general magnificence of the occasion. At this time there chanced to be an unusual number of strangers in Asuncion, including as many as four ministers and five or six consuls, more of both than at any time before or since. The approach of his Excellency was heralded by the firing of rockets, and a brilliant display of fireworks in the Plaza; and as he entered the hall, accompanied by his ministers, a passage-way was made for him, good care being taken that it should be lined on both sides with the most beautiful young ladies in the room. Bowing his way to the upper end of the hall, he stopped when he reached the foot of the throne, and facing the crowd, a chorus of female singers commenced singing an ode in his praise. When this was concluded, one of the young ladies stepped forward bearing a crown of laurel in her hand, and pronounced a discourse eulogizing Lopez as the greatest, the bravest, and best of mankind. She was succeeded by about a dozen others, each of whom delivered the little speech that had been prepared for her, and which had beforehand been approved by Lopez. Among the young ladies thus privileged were two or three of his cast-off mistresses. When all had concluded their discourses, Lopez replied to them, expressing his surprise and gratification at



such demonstrations of patriotism and loyalty. But he did not take it as at all personal to himself. No ; he accepted it as proof that the ladies of Paraguay would sustain him in maintaining the independence, the honor, and the dignity of the country, and that thus encouraged he would go on in the task imposed upon him by the office that the people had conferred upon him.

Among the crowd in attendance on this occasion were several whose nearest and dearest relatives were at that very moment in prison ; and I well recollect the sad face of a lady who was one of the chorus, as, with a breaking heart, she repressed her tears and forced her tongue to swell the strains in praise of Lopez. Poor woman ! Her husband for some cause known only to Lopez had been thrown into prison a few weeks before and loaded with fetters, from which he had been freed by death but two days before ; but she must nevertheless attend, and join in the chant glorifying the murderer of her husband.

The speeches and singing were followed by dancing, and on this occasion, for the first and only time, Lopez took part in a quadrille. For the first dance the ladies were to choose their partners, each one being before advised whom she was to select. Of course no one could be found sufficiently elevated in character, position, and family to select the President, except his own sister. He was therefore selected for a partner by Doña Inocencia, the wife of General Barrios, while such other ladies as were supposed to approach more nearly to her lofty station were detailed to dance with the members of the Cabinet and the ministers of other countries. Madam Lynch was not permitted to enter the royal set. Until some time after this she was obliged to keep in the background on public occasions ; and though present at this ball, Lopez did not venture to insult the foreign guests by bringing her face to face with them in so public a manner. Besides the foreigners, the first set was composed of Lopez and his Vice-President, Sanchez ; his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Berges ; his Minister of Government, Gonzales ; and his brother Ve-



nancio, then Minister of War and Marine. Berges and Gonzales were old men at that time. But they were to die, as well as was Don Venancio, an ignominious and horrible death at the hands of Lopez ; and of all the females who participated in the festivities of that night, there is not probably now, six years later, one in twenty yet alive. Many were flogged and executed, others expired under torture or from drudgery and starvation in the camp, and many died of exposure, hardship, and privation in the mountains to which they had been driven by the same remorseless despot who had forced them to chant his praises and crown him with laurel while yet they had homes and a hope of deliverance from his terrible power.



## CHAPTER VIII.

Discussion with Lopez. — Return from the United States. — Rear-Admiral S. W. Godon. — First Visit to General Mitre. — A Repulse from Admiral Tamandaré — Mitre's Subterfuges. — A Perplexing Dilemma. — The Allies invade Paraguay. — The Brazilian Special Envoy. — His Attempts at Bribery. — Protest against further Delay. — Instructions from Washington.

**I**N my last interview with President Lopez previous to my<sup>7</sup> return to the United States, I argued with him to the best of my ability that it was his true policy to allow the officers and crew of the Marques de Olinda, and the new President of Matto Grosso, Carneiro de Campos, to leave the country. I endeavored\* to convince him that by so doing the questions at issue between him and Brazil would be much more easy of adjustment. The seizure of the vessel would not provoke either the government or the people of Brazil to put forth the same energies in a war as would the detention of his Majesty's subjects. If the two nations were already at war, as Lopez said they were, it was not good policy for him to do any acts that should tend to unite the whole Brazilian people against him. He did not seem inclined to listen to these suggestions, and said the war was to be but a brief campaign, and would be all over before I should be back from the United States. I was anxious, not only that these unfortunate people should be allowed to depart, but that some mode of adjustment might be left open so that the war should not assume that character which I even then foresaw it must unless Lopez would show some respect to the laws of nations. Having seized them in a manner so barbarous and in such utter defiance of the laws of nations, it was plain that Brazil could not, without incurring the contempt of the whole civilized



world, treat with him as the head of a civilized nation, and that, cruel despot as he was, he would sacrifice the life of every Paraguayan sooner than relinquish his own power.

✓ But we did not agree, as he felt confident that Brazil would be glad to offer terms to him as soon as he should be willing to listen to them. Accordingly I took my departure for the ✓ United States on the 16th of January, 1865; and it was my expectation, if I should return at all, to be back there in the course of seven or eight months. I did not, however, leave New York till the 6th of September of the same year, and in the ordinary way of travel I should have reached Asuncion about the middle of November. But a series of delays and annoyances occurred that were persisted in by the allies so long that it was not till a year later I again set foot in Paraguay. The history of that year will be given very briefly; and I would gladly omit it entirely, as in relating it I shall be compelled to expose the conduct of an official of high rank in the American Navy. Still, as this delay had an important bearing on the conduct of the war, and seriously affected my relations with President Lopez, it is necessary to give it as a key, or explanation, of many things that transpired subsequently.

✓ On my way to the Plata I reached Rio de Janeiro on the 3d of October, where I learned that my predictions to President Lopez in regard to the slow progress of the war had been fulfilled. I also learned that all communication between ✓ the mouth of the river and Paraguay had ceased; and that, as no merchant vessels were permitted by the allies to ascend the river and pass within the lines of Lopez, it would be impossible for me to go to my post without the aid of an American gunboat. Fortunately, as I then thought, we had a large squadron on that station, with nothing to do but be ready on occasion to give protection to our citizens and to vindicate the national character. The squadron was under the command of Acting Rear-Admiral S. W. Godon. I conferred with him in regard to the situation in which I should probably find myself on my arrival at the river, and advised him that



without the aid of a vessel from his squadron I should not be able to reach my post. Under such circumstances his duty was clear, and so he understood it, for he advised me that he should soon proceed to the river with his squadron, and, if he found the situation as I suspected, should himself, on his arrival, detach a vessel to take me to Paraguay. This being arranged, I proceeded to Buenos Aires, where I awaited for some six weeks the arrival of the Admiral. When he did at last arrive, I found, greatly to my chagrin and to the mortification of all the Americans in the Plata, he was not disposed to help me forward to my destination. I was therefore compelled to make the effort to reach Paraguay without the aid of a national vessel. I had already lost more than two months waiting for him to redeem his promise, but he seemed insensible to the scandal and contempt that his conduct was bringing on the naval service, and I could not wait till the government could be advised of his strange perversity and send out instructions to him. I must therefore make the attempt to reach my post as best I could.

The singular conduct of the Admiral throughout this whole affair having been made the subject of a Congressional investigation, and condemned in terms of great severity in the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, I shall pass over the frivolous excuses that he alleged for not complying with my request, and shall only relate so much of his connection with my detention as was made use of by the allies in justification of their conduct in resisting my passage through their lines until they saw themselves on the verge of war with the United States. The history of the whole affair will serve to show the truth of the old adage of the beggar on horseback, and how, when the command of a naval squadron in distant waters is intrusted to an incompetent commander, the greatest interests of the country may be jeopardized, and the nation may be so compromised as to be compelled to declare war in vindication of rights that have been invaded with the approval and connivance of officials holding high rank in its own service.



It might not be a very dignified proceeding for a duly accredited minister of a government hitherto considered respectable to go to the head-quarters of one of the belligerents and beg permission, like a tourist or a pedler, to pass the military lines, when it was publicly known that we had on the station a large squadron, consisting of one First-Rate, serving as a pleasure-yacht for the admiral, and several light-draught gunboats, any one of which could at little expense and no inconvenience take him to his post in a manner consistent with the national dignity. But there was no alternative; I must obey orders.

Leaving my family, therefore, in Buenos Aires, I set forth on a river packet for Corrientes, which town is situate about thirty miles from where the allied armies were encamped. Thence I made my way immediately to the head-quarters of General Mitre, Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces and President of the Argentine Republic. I made known to him that my object in coming to his camp was to advise him I was on my way back to my post of official duty, to which I could return only by passing through his military lines. His reply was that, in his opinion, I had a right to pass through them, but it was not a matter for him alone to decide. Though Commander-in-Chief of the army, the passage of a foreign minister through the lines was a question to be treated by all the parties to the alliance. As soon, therefore, as he could communicate with his government at Buenos Aires he had no doubt that it would immediately secure the concurrence of the Brazilian special minister and of the government of Montevideo in his views, and that, so soon as he could learn of their joint approval, he would be enabled to tender me all the facilities for reaching Paraguay that national courtesy and comity could demand. A very brief delay only was asked for certain forms to be complied with, and, if I would consent to that, then all embarrassment would be avoided. I had no alternative but to submit, which I did the more willingly as in the time required for him to get the assent of his allies I could return for my family, and take them with me to Paraguay.



Returning to Buenos Aires I went directly to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Señor Elizalde, and stated the result of my interview with President Mitre. The Minister assented to all that his chief had said, and added that the Brazilian special envoy concurred in their views, and on my return to Corrientes every facility for reaching Paraguay would be extended to me. In conformity with these expressions he offered me a letter to President Mitre, requesting him, in the name of the allies, to grant all the means of reaching my post that he had promised.

Thus armed, I started again for Corrientes, this time with my family. The first night, the steamer in which we had taken passage run so hard and fast aground that it was found impossible to get her off again without discharging her cargo. Another steamer, coming along the next day, took us off and carried us as far as Rosario, though we were obliged to leave our baggage behind us. From Rosario we proceeded immediately to Corrientes, where, after waiting for some three weeks, our trunks and provisions at last arrived. I hurried at once to head-quarters, which had been moved to Paso de la Patria since my former visit to the camp. I took passage on an English transport for this place, where, on landing, I met the Argentine Minister of War, General Gelly y Obes. By him I was informed that Mitre had not yet moved his own quarters, but, being indisposed, had remained behind the army when it moved in near the river. He would, however, advise him of my return, and arrange it so that I could have an interview with him on the succeeding day. The next day Gelly y Obes came on board the transport to inform me that Mitre was still indisposed at his camp, and that any business I had with him could be arranged equally well with the admiral of the allied squadron, Baron Tamandaré, and he offered me his boat to take me to the flag-ship.

I accordingly went to confer with the Admiral. I was received by him with civility, but told that I positively should not pass through his squadron. He said his orders



were to permit no person whatever to pass his blockade, and he should obey instructions. He said, too, that his government had the right to issue and enforce such an order, and that while he was in Buenos Aires Admiral Godon had admitted such right. I denied that Admiral Godon had any authority in the matter, or that the opinion of a naval commander had anything to do with my detention. The Admiral then said he should take the responsibility of stopping me, and then — to quote my own words, as given in my official account of this interview to the Secretary of State — “the Admiral expressed his regret that his orders and duty imposed on him the necessity of doing what might seem to me an act of discourtesy, and said that anything that I might require I could have ; he would place a steamer at my disposal to return with me to Buenos Aires, and bring me back at my pleasure. He also said that if I wanted any money during my detention I could have it. I told him I did not want his money, nor did I want a steamer to go to Buenos Aires, but I did want to go to Paraguay, for it was there my government had ordered me. With this result — unsatisfactory, I believe, on both sides — I left the Admiral and returned to the transport steamer on which I was staying.” He added that it could make but little difference to me whether I went through his military lines or not, as he should pass Humaita with his squadron within fifteen days, after which the war would be virtually over, and the river open to Asuncion. As I left the ship the fleet band was paraded on deck, and though I doubt not it discoursed fine music, meant as a courtesy to me, I could not appreciate it. I had been insulted, and was powerless to resent the indignity, and doubt if ever the “Rogues’ March” fell more heavily on the ears of a deserter than did the national air of Brazil on mine as I turned my back on Tamandaré and his fellow-officers. But months after I was destined to hear the music of that band again and under other circumstances.

I returned again to the transport vessel, and, learning that President Mitre was encamped near the river, I found my way as soon as possible to his head-quarters. I presented to the



Commander-in-Chief the letter of his Minister of Foreign Relations, which letter, after stating that it was the duty of the allied powers to provide me with the facilities necessary to pass through the allied lines and into those of the Paraguayans, concluded by saying the Minister expects of the President "that he will be pleased to give the necessary orders, in order that the promise made by the government shall be duly fulfilled."

This letter, which on its face showed that his government was committed to withdraw all hindrance to my passage, seemed greatly to disturb and embarrass President Mitre. He said he would go at once and see Admiral Tamandaré, General Osorio, and others of the higher grade of officers, and have the order of Tamandaré so modified that I could pass through. So, ordering some horses, he gave me his large milk-white war-horse to ride, and mounting an inferior animal himself we rode to the landing, where we dismounted, he to go on board the flag-ship, and I to return to the transport. Before parting, however, he said he would advise me of the result of the interview in the course of an hour or two, so that I could return to Corrientes the same day. He did not, however, succeed in converting Tamandaré to his views, and sent me a note advising me that he could not give me an answer on that afternoon, but would, on the following day, address me a letter at Corrientes. I therefore went back to the latter place to await his answer. It came, as promised; but, as before, it was no answer to my question. He could not yet tell me whether or not I could pass through his military lines. The circumstances had changed since my first visit to his camp, and he must again refer the question to his government, to be decided in conjunction with its allies. He would at once refer the matter to them, and as soon as he could get an answer he would advise me of the result.

What then was to be done? I suspected that the allies did not intend to allow me to pass their lines under any circumstances, if they could stop me in any way short of bringing on a conflict with the United States. I knew that our



admiral was a convenient instrument in their hands, justifying them in their duplicity and encouraging them in the indignities they were putting upon a diplomatic agent of his own country. I could not turn back and return to the United States, for that would have been a concession that the allies and Admiral Godon were in the right and I in the wrong. I was eight thousand miles from home, and I had no colleague on the South Atlantic coast with whom to consult. Our ministers, both at Buenos Aires and Rio Janeiro, had returned home on leave of absence, and the only United States official of high grade in the vicinity had repudiated my pretensions and taken counsel with the allies to detain me. The people in Corrientes could not understand why the minister of a great and powerful nation should be thus hanging on in the rear of the allied army like a camp follower, and I heard of numerous discussions whether or not I was an accredited minister or an impostor. They had never heard before, nor, probably, had anybody else, of a minister so situated,—unable to get to his post, while his government had a large squadron lying idle in the vicinity.

But disagreeable and galling as was the situation, not only to myself but to the pride of every American in that part of the world, I could do nothing, and must wait till my own government should come to my relief, either by adopting the views of the admiral and the allies and recalling me, or by sending me the means of forcing the blockade.

In the mean while the allies were prosecuting the war after the Brazilian fashion. Fort Itapiru, with its two guns, situate just above Paso de la Patria, still held out defiantly, while the huge squadron of the allies lay a league or two below, bombarding at long range. At this time Lopez's entire army was just in the rear of the fort, one half of his troops at least being sick with the measles. The disease was so general and the means of taking care of the sick so scanty, that twenty thousand men, or more than a third of the Paraguayan forces, as I was afterwards informed, died there and then. The fort stood on a point of a rock jutting into the river, with deep



water on two sides of it; so that had the whole squadron advanced, firing at the fort as it moved, it would have silenced almost instantly its two pieces, and, turning the point, had the whole Paraguayan army directly exposed to its guns; and if then the transports had followed with troops, the entire army, with the exception of Lopez, his staff, and mistresses, that always kept out of danger, might have been easily captured. But instead of attacking in this way, Tamandaré kept his squadron at a safe distance, *bombarding furiously for twenty-eight days.* x

During this time the measles had run its course, and Lopez withdrew his army towards Humaita. As soon as it was seen that the Paraguayans had retired, Tamandaré, with characteristic valor, advised Mitre that he was ready to assist him to pass the troops to the Paraguayan side of the river. Mitre, who had long been chafing at the Admiral's mode of attack, at once embarked his whole force, and they all crossed the river without catching sight of a single Paraguayan. Itapiru was taken when no one was left to defend it, and it was at once published to the world that the allies had crossed the Parana in the face of the whole Paraguayan army, that with desperate valor opposed their landing and disputed the ground inch by inch till, overcome by the heroic onslaught of the Brazilians, a mere remnant escaped, with Lopez at their head, to the intrenchments at Humaita.

On my first arrival in Buenos Aires, when it was taken for granted that I should go up the river in an American gunboat, to which they did not pretend that they had any right to object, I had an interview with the Brazilian special envoy, Señor Octaviano. On this occasion he told me that it was not necessary for me to wait for an American gunboat, as, if I would accept it, a Brazilian steamer should be specially detailed to take me to Paraguay. I declined his offer for several reasons, among others alleging that if I were to go on a Brazilian vessel Lopez would suspect me of being in the interest of the allies, and would always regard me with such suspicion that any influence I might otherwise have with him would be lost. Some weeks afterwards, when I found that an American gun- x



boat would not go up, I addressed a note to the Minister, intimating to him that I should accept his offer of several weeks before, which he had repeated to me once or twice afterwards. In the mean while he had seen Admiral Godon, and was so thoroughly converted to the opinion that an American Minister had no rights in foreign countries, and might be treated with indignity without danger of offending the government, that he not only did not fulfil his promise previously made, but had not the courtesy to answer my letter.

Some months after this, in June, 1866, while I was waiting with dreary impatience in Corrientes General Mitre's answer to my repeated request, Octaviano came up to that place and established his head-quarters in the town. The war had dragged on so much longer than had been anticipated when Tamandaré offered to give me a steamer and all the money I wanted, that Octaviano seemed to think that if I could not be prevailed upon to keep quiet, serious difficulties with the United States might arise. He therefore thought to make use of the argument so often used by Brazilians, but which had been so unsuccessfully employed by Tamandaré. He came one day, — it was the 4th of July, 1866, — and, after a brief conversation on general topics, told me he was aware I was very unpleasantly situated where I was, and that, as the difficulties in my way had all been caused by the allies, it was but right that they should recompense me liberally for all the inconvenience to which through their action I was exposed. He said that his proposition was to be strictly confidential, and I might have no hesitation in accepting it, as, if our circumstances were reversed, and he was in the United States, he should not hesitate in accepting such an offer from our government. I told him I could not entertain any such proposition, but that I should respect his confidence. He had been more cautious and diplomatic than Tamandaré, who made his offer openly and without indicating in any manner that he thought there could be any insult in offering a bribe.

Our conversation being interrupted by the arrival of a



third party, Octaviano took his leave. He was then in an exceedingly infirm state of health; and as he stood in front of my door, and looked up and down the street as if debating which way to go, he seemed to me, though the envoy of a great empire, whose check would be honored for millions, to be an object of pity and unspeakable contempt.

Soon after this Octaviano returned to Buenos Aires, and when he next met Admiral Godon the two friends compared notes, and the incidents of the confidential interview were revealed. When I learned of this casually through some of the subordinate officers in the navy, I was exonerated from regarding it longer on my part as confidential. I, however, never made use of Octaviano's name in connection with the affair till the whole story was reluctantly admitted by Godon, before the Investigating Committee of Congress.\*

In the mean time weeks passed away, and I received no

\* "Q. Did he (Octaviano) ever allude to the offer of money made by Admiral Tamandaré?

"A. No, not by Admiral Tamandaré, but he did allude to an affair of money.

"Q. Made by whom?

"A. Not by Admiral Tamandaré.

"By Mr. Washburn:—

"Q. To me?

"A. Yes, sir. Would you like me to state anything more?

"Mr. Washburn. I am willing to have you state it.

"Admiral Godon. I will state all he did say.

"Mr. Washburn. I would like to hear it.

"Admiral Godon. I said to Mr. Octaviano that I did not see anything in that letter that he might not have answered; he said, 'What was I to offer to him? What was I to give him? He did not ask for a vessel, but simply said he left it to me to determine what to do.' I said, 'Well, why did you not offer him to go up there?' He said, 'I could not offer that, because that had been refused by General Mitre. But it left the impression upon my mind that I must do something. I could not answer the letter; I had seen Mr. Washburn before; he was in Corrientes. He complained of the expense, of the annoyance, trouble, and that the very fact of his having assisted the Minister made this thing of immense expense to him. What could I think of in regard to that? I said I will lend you any amount of money; it is a matter which you can do; I have control of it; it is there, and I can do it. Well, Mr. Washburn said no, it was not that.' He said afterwards that he felt that perhaps that was not the way he ought to do this thing. He sent a person of rank and position to offer him the money.

"Q. Did he say the money was accepted?

"A. No, sir; it was not. I said to Mr. Octaviano, 'Why, you surprise me;



notice from Mitre of the action of his government and its allies in regard to my going through to Paraguay. I wrote a letter intimating that sufficient time had passed for him to learn of their decision, and saying I impatiently awaited his answer. He replied without delay, that, for reasons unknown to him, he had received nothing on the subject from his government; but he would write again and demand immediate attention to the matter. Again weeks elapsed, and I got nothing more from Mitre; and again I went to visit him at his head-quarters, that were then on Paraguayan soil, near what was called the Estero Bellaco. Polite and courteous as ever, General Mitre protested his friendly intentions and his profound regret that his government had not replied to his repeated demand that it should, concurrently with its allies, relieve him from the responsibility of my longer detention. But a reply was now daily, even hourly, expected, and as soon as it should be received he would immediately give me notice. At any rate, I might depend on hearing from him in a very few days. With words like these, the value of which I had learned too well how to appreciate, I returned to Corrientes. There I waited again for some two weeks longer, when I received a visit from the private secretary of Mitre, who had been sent by his chief to see me and explain why it was that he had not sent me sooner the promised answer to my long-delayed demand. But the secretary brought no other message than that Mitre would give me a final answer so soon as the Brazilian special envoy, Señor Octaviano, who was already on his way back up the river, should reach his camp. If I would only hold my peace for a few days longer, all would be satisfactorily arranged. As I could not help myself, I was obliged to yield to this request, and possess myself in such patience as I could command.

did Mr. Washburn say anything?' Mr. Octaviano said no; that he would not accept it.

"*Mr. Washburn.* In my testimony the other day I said that another high official had offered me money, but I did not say who it was. I can now say that it was Minister Octaviano, because it has come up in this way." — *Testimony before Congressional Investigating Committee*, p. 105.



The Brazilian Minister soon arrived, as expected, and proceeded directly to the army head-quarters. But no answer came from Mitre ; and after waiting for some ten days, I wrote him a long letter, reciting his acts of duplicity and words of prevarication, and concluded with a protest in the following words : " It is with extreme regret that I find myself compelled to speak, after so long a delay, of my detention in this place, and to enter, as I now most earnestly do, my protest against it. I protest against the detention as a violation of the laws of nations and of all diplomatic usages and courtesies. I protest against the detention as unnecessary and unlawful in itself, and I protest against the manner in which it has been effected. If it were your purpose to thwart the wishes of my government, and prevent me from doing what it had ordered me to do, I certainly had a right to know it long before this. I protest against the repeated intimations and assurances I have from time to time received, that within a few days a final answer should be given me, when now nearly six months have passed, and such answer has not yet been received."

This protest was despatched on the 22d July, 1866, and on the 25th my long and eagerly desired instructions from the Secretary of State arrived. In terms curt and explicit, Mr. Seward expressed his surprise and indignation at the conduct of the allies. He entered into no argument to prove they were in the wrong, nor did he consent to be governed by the superior authority of Admiral Godon. On the contrary, he ordered that, after duly advising President Mitre of my official character and purposes, if a safe-conduct for myself, family, and domestics were not promptly forthcoming, I should call on Admiral Godon for a vessel and convoy from the squadron to take me through the military lines.



## CHAPTER IX.

Threatened Rupture with the United States. — Further Delays. — Strange Conduct of Admiral Godon. — Later Instructions. — The Shamokin finally ordered to Paraguay. — Firmness and Gallantry of Captain Pierce Crosby. — Tamandaré blusters and yields. — Arrival at Curupaiti. — Joy of the Paraguayans. — The French Consul, M. Cochelet. — Don Luis Jara. — The American Legation Premises in Asuncion.

IT is not often, in these modern times, that nations go to war except of deliberate purpose, and when important interests are at stake; and it may be safely assumed that at no time was there any real danger of hostilities between the United States and the allies, since both parties were earnestly desirous of peace. Yet a question had arisen concerning which one or the other must humbly recede from its position; and as it was certain not to be the United States, it was only necessary that the allies should be convinced that our government was determined to enforce its demand for them to concede it. They had, however, by listening to the opinions of Admiral Godon, put themselves entirely in the wrong; and the orders of the President were to the effect that, if they did not promptly yield the disputed point, the employment of force should instantly follow a renewed refusal. Under these circumstances I had but to reply instantly to the last letter of President Mitre, renew my demand for permission to pass through his military lines, and, if again refused, to call for a gunboat and convoy, in the sending of which no discretion was left to the Admiral, and which Mitre must either have stopped by force or have subjected himself to extreme humiliation and the contempt of his whole army. I was then in a position such as no representative of the United States ever was in before. I could certainly make a figure



in the newspapers, and should appear legally and morally entirely in the right, and the government would be obliged to sustain me. But I knew that the allies had been led into their untenable position through listening to the counsels of an ignorant garrulous American admiral, and that they would concede all that I had ever asked sooner than provoke hostilities with the United States. They must first be made aware, however, that the government had not delegated its power to a naval commander, but had repudiated the doctrine advanced by Admiral Godon, that the allies had a right to prevent the minister of a neutral nation from passing through their military lines to return to his post of official duties. The question then with me was, should I obey my instructions literally, and, while Mitre still believed I should not be sustained, make a demand which I knew would be rejected, or should I wait till he should see that a persistent refusal would be followed by war with the United States. The temptation to the former course was great, and I could not doubt that I should be fully sustained in it. But I knew it was not the interest nor the desire of either the government or the people of the United States to become involved in the Paraguayan war. It would cost millions of money, and there were no material interests at stake. Besides, I had seen enough of Lopez and his system of government to realize that it would be little creditable to the United States to become in any sense his aid or ally. If from the folly of the allies the United States were to be drawn into the contest, it was evident that Lopez would come out of the war triumphant, and the people of Paraguay would be condemned to endure perhaps for another generation the terrible despotism under which they had so long suffered.

That the allies might be convinced of the determination of our government before they had so far committed themselves that they could not recede, they must see something more formidable than despatches and protests. I had therefore to return to Buenos Aires and advise the Admiral that I had been repulsed by the allies in all my efforts to reach my post, and request him to furnish the vessel and necessary convoy



from the squadron, as he had been ordered to do by the Secretary of the Navy.

On reaching Buenos Aires I learned that our government had taken the preliminary steps to actual war, having instructed our ministers at Rio and Buenos Aires, as well as myself, to return to the United States unless all hindrance to my passage through the military lines were promptly withdrawn. But I found the Admiral was still disinclined to yield the position which he had taken, that the allies were in the right and our government in the wrong. I learned that he had been strangely intimate, during his stay there, with Admiral Tamandaré and Special Minister Octaviano, both of whom had been greatly impressed with his knowledge of diplomacy and international law. He had told them that they had a perfect right to detain me, and having got him in tow they hoped to finish the war before any counter-orders could come from Washington. What Godon expected, it is hard to conjecture. He could hardly be a rear-admiral and yet so ignorant of the laws of nations and so insensible to the national honor as to suppose our government would submit to such indignities. Yet having assured his Brazilian friends that they were in the exercise of their perfect right in holding me as a camp follower in their rear, he returned in a high state of self-complacency to Rio, leaving every American in the Plata mortified and disgusted with his conduct, while all the officers of his squadron, with the exception of two or three necessary confidants, felt humiliated and disgraced at the sorry exhibition the squadron had made.

The Admiral, however, had not been long at Rio when he learned that our government was not of his opinion in regard to the conduct of the allies. On the contrary, he was advised that it was indignant at their course, and was ordered, on being applied to again, to furnish, not only a gunboat to take me through the blockade, but a convoy, should it be necessary.

Though thus rebuked by his own government, the Admiral did not yet despair of showing to his Brazilian friends that he



should do as he pleased, and they might still detain me at their pleasure. He had been ordered to send a gunboat to Paraguay whenever I should call for it, but he could easily so manage that no communication from me should reach him for a long time. So after waiting till it was nearly time to expect a letter from me to reach Rio, he set sail in his flag-ship for the port of Bahia, some five hundred miles to the north, leaving orders for his mail to be detained till his return.

After an absence of several weeks, the Admiral returned to the station at Rio, where my dreaded letter had been awaiting him for about a month. But the Brazilians were as much as ever disinclined to have me pass their lines, and our Admiral, having stood by them so long, could not acknowledge his own humiliation and abandon them now. To break up his harmonious and profitable relations would be not only unpleasant, but personally damaging. He therefore, with a courage indicating the high confidence that he enjoyed with the late Secretary of Navy, refused to obey his orders, and in reply to my request for a gunboat and convoy he said that he would not send them, as *I had not yet complied with my instructions.*

My position now was more embarrassing than ever. It was known by everybody at the mouth of the river that our government had ordered the blockade to be forced, if necessary, to carry me to Paraguay; and it was known I was still in Buenos Aires, that several light-draught war-steamers were at hand, and yet I did not leave. Godon had written me that I must again ask permission of the allies to pass their lines without a gunboat before he would send one. But the Brazilian special envoy would not even answer my letters; and General Mitre, the Commander-in-Chief, had informed me he would hold no more correspondence with me. So between the three they had me hard and fast.

Under these circumstances there was nothing for me to do but to wait and see what further action would be taken by our own government. I had written to the Secretary of State that I had been turned back a second time by Mitre, and once after I had brought a letter from his government requesting him



to provide me with the facilities for going through. I was then awaiting an answer.

It came. Our government sent instructions to General Webb at Rio, and General Asboth, who was then on his way to Buenos Aires, that unless all hindrance to my passage were promptly withdrawn they should demand their passports, close their legations, and return to the United States. The Brazilians now saw that, kind and accommodating as was Admiral Godon, and great master as he was of international law, they must allow me to pass their lines or provoke a war with the United States. General Webb, our minister at Rio, who had been absent during all the harmonious concord between the Admiral and the Brazilians, had now returned and was inexorable. The Brazilians were not prepared for war with the United States, and knew there was to be no trifling with General Webb. They therefore told him that all obstructions to my going up through their squadron should be withdrawn. But they still hoped to make use of their obliging friend awhile longer, and they succeeded. They requested Godon to wait awhile before sending his orders for a gunboat to go up the river, so that they might have time to advise their admiral to withdraw all obstructions to its passage through the blockade. He even obligingly consented to this; and so I still remained in Buenos Aires, uncertain whether or not I should see Paraguay again till several months later, or till the admiral might be exchanged for one who would obey orders. At last, however, when no more pretexts or excuses for my further detention could be raised, the Admiral sent orders to the commander of the United States steamer Shamokin, Captain Pierce Crosby, to receive me and my family on board and take us to Paraguay.

On the 24th of October, one year lacking ten days after my arrival, I embarked, and we proceeded on our voyage. The Shamokin was a large and very long double-ender of light draft, and very difficult to steer. Uncharitable people even suspected that it was the latter quality that had influenced the Admiral in detailing her for the service. At any rate, it



was generally believed that she was so unwieldy she would never reach Paraguay. There were good reasons for believing that the Admiral would have been better pleased had these predictions been fulfilled. But if such was his desire, he made a great mistake in intrusting the command of the vessel to such a man as Pierce Crosby. He had his written official instructions, and he obeyed them with alacrity and to the letter. The channel of the river being variable and tortuous, with currents and cross-currents chopping it in places into eddies and dead water, it was clear that with her ordinary steering gear it would be impossible to prevent her from running now hard and fast into a bank or on a bar, and now from turning clear round and heading down stream. Captain Crosby, however, in spite of the known wishes of his superior that he should not reach Paraguay, set his wits to work to contrive some extra steering apparatus by which, with his large crew and excellent discipline, he could with close watchfulness keep the ship under control. To the surprise of everybody the vessel never touched the ground during the voyage.

On reaching the Tres Bocas, on the evening of November 2, we came near the lower vessel of the blockading squadron, and were boarded by her commander, who inquired of Captain Crosby what he was there for. Crosby replied that he was there by order of his government, on his way to Paraguay, to convey the United States Minister, accredited to that country, to his post, and that he desired immediately to communicate with Admiral Tamandaré and advise him of his intentions. The Brazilian said that neither the Shamokin nor the Minister could pass the military lines. The orders from his government were imperative to stop everybody, and they had never been remitted towards any individual or the war vessels of any nation. Captain Crosby said his orders were as imperative to go to Paraguay, and that he had letters from General Webb and Admiral Godon which stated that the Brazilian government had engaged to withdraw all obstructions to the passing through the blockade. These facts he



wished to communicate as soon as possible to the Brazilian admiral, after which he should proceed to carry out his instructions.

The Brazilian commander said he would refer the matter to his admiral, and a small tender was immediately despatched, with Ensign Pendleton of the Shamokin, to deliver Captain Crosby's letter to Tamandaré, who was on board his flag-ship, some twenty miles higher up the river. Mr. Pendleton returned, after having delivered the letter, reaching the Shamokin about three o'clock in the morning. He reported that Tamandaré had said the same in substance as the officer who had first boarded us, — that the Shamokin could not pass the squadron; that his orders were to allow no one to pass, and no counter-orders had ever been received by him.

It thus appeared that the delay made by Admiral Godon, at the request of the Brazilians, had either been gained through a subterfuge of the latter, or had been a made-up thing between the two. They had begged him to defer sending his orders for the gunboat to go up the river until they could first send forward their orders to Admiral Tamandaré. He had complied, and yet no such orders had been sent to him. On the contrary, his only instructions were to sink any vessel that attempted to pass his blockade. Besides the verbal message, brought back by Ensign Pendleton, was another, that the Admiral would visit the Shamokin that morning at ten o'clock.

It was now clear that, if both parties obeyed orders, there must be a fight. One or the other must back down, or somebody must be hurt. I was confident that Captain Crosby would not turn back. When the morning broke I went on deck, and found I had not been mistaken. He was getting ready for action. The guns were all loaded with shot and shell, and all was made ready so that the Shamokin might give a good account of herself should the Admiral adhere to his expressed determination.

All being ready and everything removed from the decks that could give any indication of the recent preparations for



action, we awaited the arrival of Admiral Tamandaré. He came near the appointed hour, and repeated verbally what he had said the night before to Mr. Pendleton. The Shamokin could not go through. He could not permit her to do so, without a direct violation of the orders of his Majesty's government. He said, however, he had thought of a way by which all difficulties could be avoided, and I might reach my destination. He would furnish me with a Brazilian gunboat to take me, my family, and effects through the Brazilian lines, and land me at any point above that I might select. To this I replied that his proposition came too late. Eight months before I had applied to him and to General Mitre for the means of passing through to my post, and they had been refused. At that time I did not ask even what he now offered me. If he would then have allowed me a flag of truce, I would have gone on horseback or in a whale-boat; but he had told me that he would not permit me under any circumstances to pass through his lines, and I had been compelled to apply to my own government for the means to send me through, — by force if necessary. In the mean while my detention had become a matter of public notoriety, and the question had assumed a national importance. My government had decided that the action of the allies in detaining me had been discourteous and illegal, and that not only had it a right to send its ministers to those governments with which it is at peace, but to send them on men-of-war if it so chose to do. It had therefore sent orders for the Shamokin to go to Paraguay, and go it would, unless it was stopped by force. Captain Crosby also told him that his instructions were imperative to take the American Minister to Paraguay, and he should obey his orders, unless forcibly prevented. The Admiral then said that Brazil could not at that time afford to engage in a war with the United States; that if we were fully determined to go through with the Shamokin, he should be obliged to let her pass, but that he should protest against it. We told him that he might protest as much as he liked, but nevertheless we should go through. Having thus ungraciously yielded the



point, the admiral then offered us every facility for continuing the voyage. It was known that Lopez had been putting down torpedoes in some parts of the river, and it was necessary to have a Paraguayan pilot who knew where they were; he offered to send a flag of truce with an officer from the Shamokin, bearing a letter from me to Lopez, informing him of our arrival and of our need of a Paraguayan pilot, so soon as we should pass above the blockading squadron. Mr. Pendleton was accordingly despatched with such a letter, and went through to the Paraguayan head-quarters.

Lopez received the young officer courteously, although he was greatly disappointed when he found the Shamokin was coming through unmolested. He had hoped that the Brazilians would insist on their right to stop her, and would resort to force sooner than permit her to pass through the blockade. This would of course bring the United States into the contest, and make them to all intents and purposes an ally of Paraguay, and then the result of the war would be no longer doubtful. He told Mr. Pendleton that the Shamokin could not go above Curupaiti without incurring great danger from the torpedoes, some of which it would be so difficult to find that they could not all be removed without causing great delay; but that if Captain Crosby chose to take the risk of them, he was at full liberty to go to Asuncion. He would, however, upon the approach of the Shamokin above the blockade, have a pilot who had seen all the torpedoes laid down to take the Shamokin as far as Curupaiti; then, if I chose to disembark at that point, he would find a carriage for myself and family to Humaita, and carts for my luggage and provisions. From there I could go to Asuncion on a Paraguayan steamer whenever I pleased. The next day Mr. Pendleton returned; and having advised the Admiral that we were then ready to start, on the fifth day of November, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, again got under way. As we passed up the river from Tres Bocas through the blockading squadron, it seemed incredible to us that such an immense squadron of war vessels, including monitors, iron-clads, and wooden steamers, all having heavy



armaments, besides an immense number of transports, store-ships, and merchant vessels, should be required to force a passage of the river above Humaita. It was doubtless very humiliating to the Brazilians to see the Shamokin defiantly pass up through this vast squadron, after having boasted so often and so loudly that they had a right to stop her or any other neutral vessel from passing through, and would exercise it at all hazards. We passed close alongside the flag-ship of the Admiral, who had the same band of music on the deck to do us honor, as we steamed by, that he had brought out, as it seemed to me then, to insult me, when, eight months before, he had parted with me on board the same vessel, telling me that I never should pass through his blockade. Having gone above the squadron, a Paraguayan boat, with an officer and pilot, soon pushed off from the shore above and came aboard, and the pilot, taking the direction of the vessel, took us by a tortuous course under the guns of Curupaiti, where we landed the same evening. As soon as our baggage and provisions could be put on shore, the Shamokin, having fired the customary salute, which was returned by the Paraguayans, immediately withdrew and went below the blockade. The Admiral before we passed up had sent word that her remaining any considerable time in the line between the Paraguayan fortifications and the squadron might interfere with the bombardment which he might have occasion to renew soon after. That I might, after having been so long delayed in reaching my post, which had almost threatened to involve the United States in a war, advise the government of my safe arrival in Paraguay, and of the general condition of affairs there, I had requested Captain Crosby to permit Mr. Pendleton to land with me, and return by land with a flag of truce through the allied lines, taking my despatches with him. To this request he of course acceded.

The Shamokin, having succeeded in passing the blockade and landing the Minister, returned to Buenos Aires, where her gallant commander, Captain Crosby, was subjected to repeated annoyances and persecutions by the Admiral, appar-



ently for the reason that he had not taken the hint to oblige the Brazilians by running his vessel aground in the river, rather than force the blockade. Another commanding officer, Captain Clark H. Wells, of the *Kansas*, was subjected to still greater annoyance, and sent off to hunt imaginary rocks in the ocean, to punish him for his contumacy in presuming to hold relations of friendship and intimacy with persons with whom the Admiral had quarrelled. These differences in the squadron became so notorious outside of it, that the allies, who were flattering the Admiral and assuring him he was a great diplomat, must have seen that while he was playing into their hands so readily he was bringing the naval service of his own country into contempt.

On landing at Curupaiti, a great multitude of people gathered around us, all expressing the greatest joy and the warmest welcome. Among them were several of my old acquaintances. They seemed to think that the United States was coming to their rescue, as Lopez had held out the idea to them for a long time that such would be the case; and when they saw the *Shamokin* come up the river through the blockading squadron, they regarded her as a harbinger of peace. The poor wretches had hoped that the war was soon to end, and they seemed to regard me, not only as the bearer of good tidings, but as one who could deliver them from their troubles. Soon after landing, a coach arrived at Curupaiti, and carried us to Humaita, a distance of some two and a half leagues above.

The next day I busied myself in writing despatches to send back by Mr. Pendleton, and was somewhat surprised that during the day I did not receive an invitation to visit his Excellency at his head-quarters in Paso Pucu. Toward evening, however, Dr. Stewart came in to tell me that the President was very unwell, and that it might be some days before he would be able give me an interview. The steamer *Igurey* was lying then at the bank of the river, ready to take me to Asuncion whenever I wished to go, whence I could return almost any day so soon as the President should sufficiently recover



to be able to converse with me. The same evening, therefore, we embarked for the capital. During the time of our brief stay there, several of the English physicians, and a few other foreigners in the service, called to see me, and all alike expressed their great relief at my return. They intimated that matters were going very badly, and that Lopez was getting desperate, and had developed into such a blood-thirsty character that there was no safety or security for any person whatever in the country. They believed that the presence of the minister of a strong government would have a restraining influence upon him, or at least that such a person would have it in his power to advise the world of the condition of affairs in Paraguay, which no one else in the country was permitted to do.

Though I had been thus welcomed, yet the sickness of Lopez was caused, as I believe, mainly from disappointment that I had not been stopped by the Brazilians. He had learned ere this that he had made a great mistake in commencing the war as he had done, and that the allies were determined to pursue it until he was killed or driven out of the country. The alliance, much to his disappointment, had endured for nearly two years, and there were no signs of a rupture, nor was either party to it disposed to withdraw; and if they continued united and persistent, their great superiority of resources must eventually result in his overthrow. He had, therefore, nourished the idea that the Brazilians would make good their boasting words that they would never permit an American Minister or vessel to pass their blockade; and as he was pretty well convinced that the American government would never tolerate such insolence, he cherished the hope that war would result, and that thus he would be able to escape from the dilemma in which his own rashness and ambition had involved him. But when the Brazilians receded from this position, and permitted the Shamokin to pass, his illusion was dispelled, and on the day following my arrival he gave way to such hopeless despair that he fell into a state of syncope, and was at the point of death for nearly



a week. Had he died then, the world would have given him the undeserved credit of having been a patriot and a hero ; and half a million Paraguayans, that were afterwards sacrificed to his selfishness, cruelty, and ambition, would be now alive *to mourn his loss*. From this condition he gradually rallied, and in the course of three or four weeks regained his former health.

On reaching Asuncion we were received very cordially by all classes of people. In coming we had opened the door for a ray of light to penetrate from the outer world, concerning which the inhabitants there had been for more than a year entirely ignorant. Since I had been away all communication had been so completely cut off, that my good friend, the French Consul, M. Laurent Cochelet, had been eleven months without receiving a letter, paper, or any message whatever from beyond the limits of Paraguay. Mr. Cochelet had unfortunately, soon after his arrival in the country, incurred the dislike of Lopez. There were a considerable number of Frenchmen in the country, and they had from time to time complaints to make against their treatment by the local authorities. Their consul was a gentleman of refinement and education, zealous in his office ; and whenever a countryman appealed to him to obtain redress for any grievance, he was prompt to inquire into his case, and, if necessary, to demand justice. The government of Paraguay, however, had been long accustomed, even before the time of Lopez, to treat all persons, foreigners and natives alike, according to its own will, and to permit no inquiry to be made into the justice of its proceedings. M. Cochelet, therefore, was thought to be officious and meddlesome, and, before he had been long in the country, Lopez intimated to the French government that it would be agreeable to him if Cochelet could be withdrawn, and somebody else sent in his place. The French government replied that it had every confidence in M. Cochelet. Then Lopez denied that a consul had any right to treat with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and said that that privilege was conceded only to ministers, or to persons of diplomatic



character. To this the French government replied, that if Paraguay did not choose to treat with a consul on questions other than those purely commercial, it would withdraw M. Cochelet, and not send anybody else in his place. It was a matter of choice, either to treat with M. Cochelet or nobody. Lopez, being extremely anxious to have the leading governments of the world represented at his court, — by ministers if possible, and, if not by consuls, — would not break off all relations with France. England had no consul there, neither had Spain nor Italy, nor had any great power except France; and therefore, obnoxious as M. Cochelet was to Lopez, he tolerated his presence, notwithstanding he would look after the interests of his countrymen when Lopez wished to arrest, imprison, or rob them without giving any reasons therefor.

On reaching Asuncion my first care was to obtain a house. Fortunately, the best house in the place, not belonging to the Lopez family, was vacant. It belonged to Don Luis Jara, who was in the army, and whose partner in Buenos Aires, x Don Carlos Saguier, had given me a letter to him, requesting him to tender the use of his house to me. Jara was very glad to do this, as the premises being occupied by me would be protected in case the town should be taken by the allies, and would not be liable at any time to be taken for hospital purposes by Lopez. The house was very large, and occupied nearly an entire square. It was built in the Moorish fashion, with a large yard, or patio, in the centre, with a corridor extending the whole length in front, and other corridors within extending along three sides of the patio. It was finely furnished, and two slaves of Jara had been left there by him to take care of it. All that he required of me was, that whenever he should come to the capital he should have one room set apart for his occupancy. He, however, never came to claim even this small privilege in his own house, for he died about a year after. He had never been married, but, like most Paraguayans of wealth, he had several illegitimate families; as he left no will, none of these children were heirs



to the estate, which, I suppose, according to the laws of Paraguay, escheated to the government. The description of the premises which I occupied, and the manner in which I came into their possession, are given here for reasons that will appear hereafter.



## CHAPTER X.

Reception at Asuncion. — General Anxiety. — Englishmen in Prison. — J. J. Acuña. — G. F. Masterman : his Arrest, Trial, and Imprisonment. — His Dungeon. — Treatment of Prisoners. — Ramon Capdevila. — Intercession for Masterman. — His Release. — Life in Asuncion. — Captain Simon Fidanza. — The Casals.

WE reached Asuncion on the morning of November 8, 1866, fourteen months and two days having elapsed since we left New York. Our welcome, alike by former friends and by those with whom I had never been acquainted, was such as I hope never to experience again. It was sincere and earnest, but it was based on a hope that, the blockade having been once broken, the war must soon end. I had brought with me a ray of light from beyond their prison, but beyond that I knew they were deceived, and that I should have no power to aid or protect them. Yet the people, both natives and foreigners, nourished the hope that Lopez would at least respect the minister of a strong neutral nation, and that such a person among them would afford some protection from the dangers that seemed to be gathering thick and ominous all around them. It had evidently been intimated by the police to the native Paraguayans, that civility and attention would not be displeasing to the government ; and the next number of the *Semanario* was abounding with its admiration of the great Republic of the North, and of its minister, who, against all the discourtesies and efforts of the allies to detain him, had finally forced their blockade. It stigmatized in bitter, though just, terms the whole conduct of the allies towards me. It ridiculed the assumption that they had a right to stop me, and taunted them with acting the bully and the coward by first insisting that they had a right to stop me, a right which they would never yield, but which they notwith-



standing did yield when they found that the government of the United States would not submit to their insulting pretensions. It also contained numerous paragraphs highly eulogistic of myself, and commending me in the strongest terms for persisting in enforcing my way, until in mortification and disgrace the allies had been forced to humble themselves, and permit the American gunboat to pass through their blockade, flaunting the American flag in derision and contempt in their faces.

The people of Asuncion took the hint from these semi-official notices that there was no danger in showing us attentions, and as soon as we were fairly domiciled, the principal people of the place called upon us, to bid us welcome, and were almost oppressive in their kindness and offers of assistance and service. Flowers, fruit, and dulces were sent to us every day by different families, and in a manner that showed the kindest feelings on the part of the donors. The hospitality of the Paraguayans, whenever the exercise of it did not expose them to danger from the government, has been remarked by nearly all travellers who have ever visited that country. But such general manifestations of it as we received were probably unprecedented in the country. After our long and anxious voyage, the many annoyances, and, I may say, humiliations, which we had experienced from the allies, it was with a great sense of relief that we found ourselves at last settled in our own house in Asuncion. Having brought a supply of provisions which were intended to be sufficient for at least a year, beyond which time I did not suppose it possible that the war could last, we lacked for nothing necessary to health or comfort; and were it not for the fact that the people around us appeared to be so anxious about the future, and that there were so many people, some of them my former intimate friends, in prison, and such a general state of anxiety, our position would have been very agreeable.

Among the prisoners in whom I took the most interest were Drs. John Fox and James Rhind, English physicians, and Mr. George F. Masterman, an English apothecary. I learned



that they had been arrested some two weeks before my arrival. The offence for which the two former were imprisoned was this. The mother of the President, Doña Juana Carillo de Lopez, having been sick for several days, a telegram was sent to her son, at head-quarters, advising him that her symptoms were worse, and requesting permission to call in these two physicians. An order was sent about seven o'clock in the evening to Dr. Rhind, to take Dr. Fox with him and go and visit the old lady. The latter, unfortunately, was not at his house, and could not be found immediately; and Dr. Rhind, knowing the danger that would result from his disobeying orders and going alone, thought he must wait until Dr. Fox should appear. In the mean while the old lady got impatient, and another telegram was sent to the President, informing him that the physicians had not come. Another order was immediately sent, commanding the immediate arrest and imprisonment of the two doctors. They were accordingly sent to prison, and confined separately in dark, damp cells, with sentinels placed over them. This was their situation at the time of my return to Paraguay.

The old Postmaster-General of Asuncion, Don Juan J. Acuña, and his wife, were also prisoners at the time of my return, and had been for several months. Senor Acuña was an old man, nearly seventy years of age. He was a native of the Argentine province of Tucuman, and had come to Paraguay in his youth, where he had married a young lady, a member of the ill-fated and long-persecuted Machain family. During my first residence in Paraguay, I was more intimate with the old gentleman than with any other Paraguayan. I visited very often at his house, and we were in the habit of playing chess together almost every day. His position as Postmaster-General was a very disagreeable one, as it devolved upon him the task of examining all the newspapers that came into the country, and seeing that no paper containing anything disrespectful to the government of Paraguay was allowed to go out of the post-office. A person in this position would naturally be disliked by foreigners and by others whose papers



he was required to detain, and it was not strange that they should regard him as a tool or spy of the government. Yet he was so obliging, and always so sociable and good-natured, that he was almost universally liked. His wife, Doña Pancha, came as near to my idea of a Christian woman as any person I have ever met. Her family had been persecuted by Francia and by the elder Lopez until it was nearly destroyed. Most of the surviving members of it were beyond the limits of Paraguay. But affliction or persecution had not chilled her heart, but rather made it more sensitive to the sufferings of others. The office of Postmaster-General of Paraguay only afforded the incumbent the small pittance of thirty dollars a month, and as the family had no fortune beyond the house they lived in, the old lady, with her servants, eked out the supplies, not only for the support of her own family, but for a large number of the infirm and destitute, by the making of *chipa* and *dulces*. She appeared to be always at work; and I was assured by my fair countrywoman, the wife of the French Consul, Izarié, who assisted the old lady very much in these contributions, that the number of poor dependants on this family was almost incredible.

To my surprise, on my return to Paraguay, I found the two were prisoners. What offence they had committed no one seemed to know. They were in solitary confinement in separate cells, and no one, not even their children, was permitted to visit them, or even to see them. Some two months after my return, in passing one morning through the street not far from their house, I thought I saw, on the opposite side and a little in front of me, my old friend. I stepped quickly after him, and, hailing him, he greeted me very cordially, and we walked along together for a short distance. He told me that he and his wife had both been let out of prison the day before; that the old lady was very sick indeed, and would be very glad if I would call and see her. I promised to do so, and the next day I went to the house, and was invited into the room where the poor invalid was lying upon the bed. She was a mere skeleton; her voice was gone, and she could



hardly speak in a whisper. She seemed very glad to see me, and undertook to tell me something of her sufferings. I could only make out, as she held up her bony fingers and motioned towards the prison where she had been confined, "Eight months, eight months." Those two words told the whole story. The poor old lady had been in solitary confinement, with no human face that she could look upon except a brutal soldier, for eight months, and had only been let out of prison in time to die. A day or two after that I was greatly surprised to receive a note from the old man. What temerity, thought I, for a person in his situation to send me a note. Of course the government would know all about it. However, when I read the note I thought it could not be so very dangerous, as it was simply a request that I would call down and play a game of chess with him. I went, and took with me a letter for him which had come to my care from his long-time near neighbor and our common friend, Mr. George Paddison, formerly chief engineer of the railroad. He said he would not open the letter nor read it ; that his wife had been arrested for no other reason, that he knew of, than that a nephew of hers, in Buenos Aires, had written her a letter which had been intercepted by the government, and of the contents of which they knew nothing ; and therefore, lest this letter might do him harm, and lest the very fact that he had received a letter unbeknown to the government might some time become known and be construed to his prejudice, he tore it up into fragments before my eyes without reading it. He said, moreover, that he had not the most remote idea, at that moment, of the reason why he had been imprisoned. He could understand why the old lady had been, as her relations were known to be among the most influential of the Paraguayans in Buenos Aires, and were using all their influence against Lopez ; but for himself he could not conceive what had been the motive of his arrest. He said that his object in sending me the invitation to come and play chess with him was that he might request me not to visit his house any more. He was a marked man, and though



he would have been delighted if we could resume our former relations, yet it was too dangerous. I told him I fully appreciated his situation, and bade him adieu. Within a few days I was relieved by learning that the old lady was dead, and within a few weeks after that the old man had joined her in the unseen world. Even at that period, the best news I could receive from many of my friends was that they were dead.

The English doctors, Fox and Rhind, remained in prison about two months. They were both of them in feeble health at the time of their arrest, and, being confined in dark, damp cells, it was a wonder that they survived. They were both very sick during the term of their imprisonment, but were not permitted to hold communication with any one, not even to converse with the sentinel who was over them. They could not send to their houses for changes of clothing, or for the medicine which they felt they must have or soon die. They did not die, however, but at the end of two months' confinement were pardoned out of prison, after which Dr. Fox was called down to the army, and Dr. Rhind remained in charge of the hospitals at Asuncion. The latter never left Paraguay, but he was fortunate enough to die a natural death, instead of sharing the fate of most of the foreigners in the country at the time of his imprisonment. Masterman, however, still remained in prison. His arrest had not taken place until a few days after that of his fellow-countrymen. The offence alleged against him was, that he had endeavored to deliver some letters from England for Dr. Rhind, which had been given him for that purpose by the French consul. There being no law against it, neither Masterman nor anybody else supposed there was anything criminal in an act that was in accordance with universal custom.

The description of the prison, and the trial to which he was subjected, I give in Masterman's own words.\*

\* Seven Eventful Years in Paraguay: A Narrative of Personal Experience amongst the Paraguayans. By George Frederick Masterman, late Assistant Surgeon, Professor of Materia Medica, Chief Military Apothecary General Hospital, Asuncion, Paraguay. Formerly of Medical Staff of her Majesty's 82d Regiment.



"I then, as far as the dim light of the candle allowed me, examined my dungeon. It was about twelve feet by eight, the walls of rough adobes. From a heavy column in the centre of the wall sprung two arches, and above them the roof at a considerable height, palm trunks and tiles laid in earth. The floor was of mud, full of hollows, cold and wet; the only furniture a *cartrò*, that is, a hide stretched on a wooden frame, and a broken chair. I soon found my prison was so situated that, except in bright weather, I should live almost in darkness. The large door was wide open, but as it looked only into a long, arched passage connecting the two courtyards of the Colegio (for I was within the old Jesuit College), all the light I could get would be that reflected from the wall.

"About ten in the morning a sergeant came in, and ordered me to follow him. I did so, and was taken to a small room in front of the building. I found there Captain Silva, an *alferez*, a sergeant, and Señor Ortellado, a notary. By the latter I was sworn on a sword, and then examined very tediously for several hours. Written questions were read to me; my answers were taken down on loose sheets, and then copied on stamped paper. I was first asked a number of formal questions about my name, age, birthplace, religion, and so on, and then if I knew why I had been arrested. No. Did I not know that it was the first duty of a soldier to obey his superiors? Yes, certainly; but I was not a soldier, my rank being honorary. Was I in the service of the Republic? Yes, but without a contract, and in a non-military capacity. Did I not know that it was forbidden by law to deliver letters which had not passed through the post-office? No; I had never seen or heard of such a law, nor had I even infringed it since I had never delivered the letters. Would send them there, if permitted, and would, of course, pay the postage. He then asked me if I had the letters, and ordered me to give them up. I demurred, questioning their right to deprive me of them, as they had not shown me by what authority they were acting. Captain Silva told the sergeant to put a set of *grillos* (fettters) on the table. Taking the hint, for of course resistance was out of the question, I gave up the letters. I was then examined at great length about my private correspondence, the people I wrote to, where they lived, and so on. . . .

"On returning to my cell, I found it had been improved by the arrival of some bedding from my quarters, with a wash-hand basin,



a water-jar, and a chair ; but it was still a most wretched place, and miserably cold.

"Near the threshold, but in the passage, stood, day and night, a sentry armed with musket and bayonet, and relieved every two hours,—a more effectual guard than bolts or bars. He stood facing me, and about eight feet from my bed ; and from nine o'clock at night until the reveille sounded the next morning, every quarter of an hour he shouted '*Sentinela alerta !*' at the top of his voice, to show that he was not sleeping. This startling cry was taken up in succession by the others, in the chain of sentries, within and without the prison, and by the time the last had finished the first began again. It was terrible ! To be thus awakened by a sudden yell, all hope of sound and peaceful sleep destroyed, and the painful consciousness that one was a prisoner perpetually forced upon the attention, was a cruel torture. Never shall I be able to efface it from my memory.

"Often have I passed the whole night pacing wearily up and down the short length of my prison, or lying with my fingers firmly pressed up my ears, lest I should fall asleep but to be awakened by that dreaded cry. For months I only slept the third night.

"To return to my examination. The next day I was called to hear the evidence read over to me from beginning to end. When it was being taken, I noticed that Captain Silva and the notary frequently left the room with the papers, and I now found why they had done so. My replies, nominally copied from the loose sheets, had been grossly distorted ; all that tended to exculpate me was omitted ; and they had inserted a fictitious confession of guilt, that I had asked pardon for my offences, and that I had stated I was willing to bear any punishment awarded me ! . . .

"Up to that time I had received no ill-treatment from him (Lopez), and thought that as an Englishman, and one who had faithfully served him many years, I should soon be set at liberty. Without a reply, Ortellado told me to sign the depositions. I declined to do so, saying that they knew they were falsified and unjust to me. He called my attention to the irons again, and at the same time assured me that if I would give him no further trouble I should be set at liberty in a few days. Seeing it was useless to resist, and dreading the severities to which I should have been exposed had I been put in irons,—deprived of bed and chair, and



with only a hide upon the ground to sit or lie upon, — I reluctantly signed the papers. . . . I gradually became accustomed to the dim light reflected from the wall of the passage, and in clear weather could see to read for several hours a day. But when the sky was overcast, and until the sun was high, I was in a gloom so deep that to any one entering from without it would have seemed total darkness. My greatest fear was that the damp would affect my health; for the mud floor was beneath the level of the courtyard, and the walls, the beams, and even my mattress on its under side, were covered with fungoid growths, green and slimy with mouldiness. The cell was miserably cold, but they would not let me have a blanket from my quarters, and I had only a tattered piece of red baize, which had long done duty as a table-cover, in place of it. . . . Next to my prison was an open corridor, where a great many *presos* were confined in chains, which all day long clanked dismally, and often in the night I heard them clash suddenly when the prisoners were startled in their sleep by the cry of the sentries. Now and then I caught sight of them through a chink in the thick boards which covered the window, and sometimes they passed to the great quadrangle through the passage in front of my door. They were of all ages, some very old men, others but boys, but all reduced to the last stage of emaciation, mere brown skin and bone. All had one pair of heavy fetters riveted on their ankles, rough with callosities and cicatrices of old wounds, several two; and one man bore on his skeleton-like legs three heavy bars, which swung backwards and forwards as he slowly shuffled along. Yet these sufferers were not half so wretched as one would have thought; they used to laugh and sing, and have clattering, staggering races in their narrow den. . . . Every week or so, one and another of them would be taken out to the patio to be flogged. These were sad days for me. I dreaded their coming, and did not recover my equanimity for many hours afterwards.

“I think the fact of hearing, without being able to see the infliction of the punishments, made them more terrible. To hear the dull, heavy thud of the stick wielded by those stalwart, pitiless corporals, and to know that it was descending on living flesh, quivering in agony, made me faint and sick with horror. As a surgeon, I was, they told me, one of the coolest of operators, and yet these sounds used to unnerve me completely the whole day through. I



then little thought that I should one day have to suffer a worse punishment. . . . In the inner courtyard were several political prisoners, all well known to me. One, an Argentine named Capdevila, I saw pass my door several times; he had been a merchant of some wealth in Asuncion. . . . His wife bribed Mrs. Lynch to intercede for him, and he, with one or two others, was set at liberty. Pitying his countrymen who were still in captivity, he sent them food and clothes several times; but this act of charity was construed into an offence against Lopez, and he was sent to the Colegio and put in irons. About a month afterwards I saw the poor old man marched off (to the Policia, I suppose), and return with two pairs of grillos on his legs; they took away also his hide *cartrè*, and left him to lie on the bare ground. Three weeks afterwards he passed slowly and feebly, and returned some hours later with three bars. He caught sight of me as he went by, and in raising his hat stumbled and fell. He was brutally kicked until he scrambled up again. His cup of misery was not yet full; after a shorter interval he was once more marched out, and, as several hours passed away, I made sure that he had been set at liberty, but to my grief and horror he returned late at night in a far worse plight than before. He still wore three bars, and so thick and long that he staggered under their weight, and was more than half an hour crossing the patio, inch by inch, and at length he crawled by my door on his hands and knees. Yet he did not die for several months afterwards!\*

"Sometimes I heard blows, but frequently the cries of the victim alone told how they were torturing him. One afternoon a poor fellow was *estacado*, horizontally crucified, just beneath my window. Never shall I forget what I endured that day in listening to his moans and occasional frantic yells and prayers for mercy, and in picturing to myself what he was suffering. After hours of such torments I would see them sometimes led, sometimes carried, back again, pale and bleeding, a piteous spectacle."

In this wretched place, and subject to such treatment,

/ \* In Resquin's diary the name of Ramon Capdevila appears in a list of forty-one who were executed as traitors on the 9th of August, 1868. His brother, Aureliano, according to the same authority, was executed on the 23d of the same month, with twenty-two others, including John Watts, the hero of Riachuelo, but for whose valor and judgment not a vessel of the Paraguayan squadron would have returned from that disastrous conflict.



Masterman was held a prisoner for eleven months. As I had been so well received by Lopez on my return, I often thought whether or not I might venture to request the liberation of these three Englishmen. Greatly to my relief, Fox and Rhind were set at liberty at the end of two months, and I was daily hoping to hear the same of Masterman. But month passed after month, and his prison doors were not opened, and many a night did I lay awake, perplexing my brain to devise some way to extricate him from his miserable prison. But what could I do? To intercede for him on the ground that he was not guilty, or that his punishment was excessive, would greatly enrage Lopez, and would probably subject Masterman to worse treatment. I knew him to be a weakling, both bodily and mentally, that his real offence could have been nothing more than some unfortunate expressions which his ungovernable and foolish tongue had let fall, but which in any other country would never have been noticed. At length, however, the occasion seemed opportune to intercede in his favor. If I could not ask his release on his own account, I could on account of my family. Mrs. Washburn was in a precarious state of health, and as the only doctor in the capital (Rhind) was unreliable, being frequently unable, from sickness, to leave his house for days together, I suggested to Minister Berges that it would be a great favor to me and Mrs. Washburn if Masterman might be set at liberty, in order to attend my family. It was a very delicate affair to manage, and I was compelled to so far put aside all questions of dignity as to solicit the influence of Madam Lynch. In any country but Paraguay, it would have been manifestly improper to ask for such intercession. But "is it lawful to do good, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it?" Again, was it right to deceive his Excellency, and to prefer my request on the ground of a personal favor, when, in fact, my real motive was to extricate Masterman? I leave the answer to casuists.

My diplomacy was successful; he was set at liberty; and that he might be more secure, I took him into my house, and



kept him there until he was seized from my side by the soldiers of Lopez, as he started from the legation to accompany me when I was finally leaving the country. After I had secured his liberation, I soon found I had a diminutive white elephant on my hands, one that I could not send away, for that would be equivalent to sending him to torture and execution. I was obliged to tolerate him, though he had many eccentricities that were not agreeable. Yet he was skilful in his profession of pill-mixer, and had learned to be a very fair physician. My efforts to obtain his rescue a second time, in which I was also successful, will be related in the proper place.

Excepting for the miseries and troubles of other people that came to my knowledge, the time for the first few months after my return to Asuncion would have been, if not altogether agreeable, still tolerable. I had scarcely anything to do of an official character, and busied myself to a great extent in getting together the materials for the first part of this work, in which I was very much assisted by Mr. Bliss, who had already commenced, at the instance of the government, to write a history of Paraguay in Spanish, and as he had collected and arranged in their chronological order a great mass of facts, the work was comparatively easy.

Perhaps my return to Paraguay was not so welcome to any other person in the country as to the French Consul, M. Cochelet. As before said, he was greatly out of favor with the President, so much so, that the Paraguayan people, as well as the foreigners, dared not visit him or hold any communication with him. Before leaving Paraguay to return to the United States, we had lived in adjoining houses and had been extremely intimate, and my return was particularly desired by him, as then there would be one family in the country that he and his could visit whenever they chose. I had a billiard-table in my house, and scarcely a day passed until he left the country but that we played several games of billiards and of chess. We often went partridge shooting together, and our rides through those little-frequented roads which, running in all directions around Asuncion, pass over the gentle hills, and



between cultivated fields, the citron-trees on both sides emitting the most fragrant odor imaginable, and with a great variety of other trees of variegated hues, all extremely beautiful, formed the most grateful diversion during this dark and anxious period. For riding on horseback the roads were altogether the finest, the most diversified and charming, that I have ever seen in any country.

Back from Asuncion, about a league and a half from the town, is a large open plain, about two leagues wide and five or six in length, called Campo Grande. This camp was bounded on each side by gentle wooded acclivities, and at a distance



RANCHO OF THE POORER CLASS.

varying from quarter to half a mile apart were the ranchos in which the inhabitants lived. Some of these were little better than huts, but generally, though they made but an unpretending appearance, they were very comfortable habitations.



One of the best houses standing on the border of this camp was rented, soon after my arrival in the country, by an Italian named Fidanza, who had been a man of considerable means in Buenos Aires, having interests in several steamers, one of which he usually commanded. About the time that the war with Brazil commenced he had come up to Paraguay with a steamer called the *Villa del Salto*. His object had been to make a sale of the vessel and cargo to Lopez, and he had nearly completed his bargain, and supposed that he should be able to leave, having made a profitable operation, when Lopez concluded to declare war against the Argentine Confederation, to take his steamer without paying for it, and declare it a prize of war. With a consideration to Fidanza, however, very different from what he had shown to the officers of the *Marques de Olinda*, he allowed him to take of his own stores a considerable supply, enough, as Fidanza supposed, to last him for two or three years. Finding that he was not likely to get away from the country for a long time, he took this rancho in Campo Grande, and removed his stores to that place, where he lived with profuse hospitality, welcoming all who went to visit him with the best that his house could afford. In our partridge-shooting expeditions in Campo Grande we usually dined at his house, and though we enjoyed exceedingly his generous fare, yet he seemed to enjoy in playing the host even greater pleasure than we did in partaking of his bounty. His house being about half-way on the road to Limpio, where I continued after my return from the United States to visit, as formerly, my old friend Don Mauricio, I was his frequent guest. He was exceedingly anxious to get out of the country and return to his family in Buenos Aires; and while the situation there was yet tolerable, and he was supposed to be in favor with Lopez, he said he would gladly surrender half his fortune, which was considerable, could he again set foot beyond the limits of Paraguay.

Don Mauricio had heard of my return with great satisfaction, as, but a short time before, his elder son had been sent



up, a helpless invalid, from the army to the hospital in the capital. The old man being too aged and infirm ever to leave home, and his sons, slaves, and peons having all been taken for soldiers, he sent his daughters to the capital to bid us welcome and to invite us to visit him at Limpio. They were also to look after their brother, who lay helpless and paralyzed in his lower extremities in the hospital. While in town they learned, greatly to their consternation, that he was to be sent to the encampment at Cerro Leon, where, with the fare commonly given to the sick, and the rough treatment of the Paraguayan surgeons, they feared he would not long survive. They accordingly came to me and asked if I could not intercede and get permission for him to go to his home at Limpio, where it was possible he might recover, and would certainly relieve the state of the expense of taking care of him. It was not within the rules of the diplomatic regulations for me to make any such request of the government, neither had it been within the same rules, when the other brother was conscripted as a soldier, to make it a personal request that he should be discharged, and allowed to return to his home; nevertheless, I did so, and in both instances my request was granted. I had no sooner left the country, however, than he was re-enlisted, and when I returned was a soldier at Humaita, while the other was an invalid in the hospital.



## CHAPTER XI.

A Visit to Lopez's Head-Quarters. — Description of Humaita. — The Encampment at Paso Pucu. — Dr. Stewart, the Surgeon-General. — Other English Officers. — Their Warnings and Forebodings. — Interviews with Lopez. — His Opinion of Brazilian Soldiers. — Release of Americans from Prison. — Obsequiousness of Lopez's Officers. — Admiral Tamandaré. — Brazilian Artillery Practice. — An American Claim allowed by Lopez. — Arrest of Don Luis Jara. — Picking a Money-Box. — Alleged Paraguayan Victories. — Prospect of American Mediation.

ON the 20th of December, about seven weeks after my return to Asuncion, I was advised by the Minister for Foreign Relations, Don José Berges, that the President, having recovered his health, would be pleased to see me at his headquarters, and that a steamer would be at my disposal to take me to Humaita whenever it would suit my pleasure to visit his Excellency. I accordingly left the same evening, and on the morning of the second day reached Humaita, where I was furnished with a horse and guide to take me to Paso Pucu.

Of the great natural advantages of Humaita, a very correct idea may be formed by the following description by Colonel Thompson: "Humaita, is situated on a level cliff, about thirty feet above the river, on a sharp horse-shoe bend of the stream, to which it presents a concave surface, thus giving the power of concentrating the fire of all the batteries on any point in the bend. The cliff is 2,500 yards long, being bounded by a carrisal\* at each end, and the village is surrounded by a trench resting at both ends on the river; at the commence-

\* Carrisal is a broad sheet of water sometimes surrounded, like a lake, and sometimes on the margin of a river, full of coarse strong grass that gives it at a little distance the appearance of a plain, and which is so thick that a canoe can with difficulty be forced through it.











ment of the two carrisals this trench is 14,800 yards long, including the redans, which are placed about every 250 yards, and encloses a space of flat pasture-land 4,000 yards long and 2,000 yards wide. Going up the river from Humaita, there is no possible communication with the land before reaching Pilar, on account of the carrisals, with the exception of a cliff called Tayi, fifteen miles above Humaita, where there is a road leading to the inland high roads. The carrisal between Humaita and Tayi is more or less in the shape of a diamond, with perpendiculars respectively seven and four miles long, and is called the Potrero Obella. It is totally impassable in most parts, but there are one or two tracks by which it can be traversed. On the land side it is completely shut off by an impenetrable jungle, having only one opening, by which cattle were introduced in large quantities, and were taken out as required at the Humaita end. When the river is low, there is a path along the edge of it from Tayi to Humaita, but the Arroyo Hondo has to be crossed in canoes. Outside the trench of Humaita, the ground for some leagues is full of morasses, with thin pieces of dry land between them, more especially near San Solano and Tuyucué, but most of the ground near the trench is passable."

Below Humaita, about a league and a half, is Curupaiti, which was fortified, until after it had been passed by the Brazilian squadron, even more strongly than Humaita. At about an equal distance from the two points, situate on a fine open plain having a gentle incline, with several orange-groves that diversified the scene and gave shelter from the sun, stood the head-quarters of Lopez at Paso Pucu. On the edge of the grove was the house occupied by the President. It was made of bamboo and thatch, its roof being of the latter. There was a deep awning in front, and alongside was a long building occupied as quarters for his staff. In the rear, completely hidden by the orange-trees, was the house of Madam Lynch, and beyond that was another occupied by General Barrios and his wife. Other officers enjoying the confidence of Lopez, like Generals Resquin and Bruguez, Colo-



nel Thompson, and others, had houses near by, and all protected by the orange-grove from the sun and rain. I was assigned a house of similar structure at a little distance from the grove, very near one occupied by Dr. Stewart, the Surgeon-General of the army. This suited me very well, for our relations had long been of the most intimate and confidential kind, and I could learn more from him of the true state of affairs there than from all the other Englishmen in the country.

x Dr. Stewart had come to Paraguay as early as 1856, and soon after entered into military service as surgeon in the army, and had been promoted to the highest medical rank on account of his efficient services. He was a Scotchman by birth, had seen service in the Crimea, was a man of easy, winning manners, thoroughly informed both in the theory and the practice of medicine and surgery, and was a great acquisition to the military service of Paraguay. He had organized a system of hospitals, and had induced the government to bring out several other English physicians as assistants, so that during the war the medical branch of the service was far more efficient and better conducted than in the camp of either the Brazilians or the Argentines. Having been physician to Lopez for several years, he knew more of his character than any other foreigner in the country; and before I made my visit home in 1865, I had learned through him that the vanity and ambition of the young President were unbounded, and that no consideration for his people would ever interfere with his selfish plans.

x On reaching the encampment, I was astonished to observe the great change that had come over, not only Dr. Stewart, but the other Englishmen at head-quarters, Colonel Thompson, and the civil engineer, Mr. Valpy. Before I had left Paraguay, though they all knew Lopez was a tyrant capable of any atrocity, they had never supposed that they were themselves in any personal danger. But it was all changed now. They had seen that Lopez was resolved that, if he could not continue to rule over Paraguay, no one else should, and was bent on the destruction of the entire people. They early warned me to be very careful in my intercourse with him; that, if I



could keep in favor with him, my presence in the country might somewhat restrain his barbarities ; but that, were he to quarrel with me, it would have been infinitely better for them all had I never returned. They all of them expressed the opinion that they would never leave the country alive, and gave me the cheering information that my chance of escape was little better than theirs. Yet, strange as it may appear, when nearly everybody about the camp had either been killed in battle, died of disease, or been murdered by Lopez, these three Englishmen were all taken prisoners by the Brazilians, and are now alive to testify to the barbarities of this common enemy of mankind. With one other exception,—Colonel Wisner, the Hungarian,—all the rest, so far as I knew or can recollect them, perished before the cause of all their misery fell, pierced by a lance in the mud of the Aquidaban.

During my stay at head-quarters I had several protracted interviews with Lopez, during which we discussed the situation at considerable length. He said his situation was not so desperate as it had been previously, nothing like so desperate as it had been when his whole army was prostrate with the measles at Itapirú, while Tamandaré was bombarding for twenty-eight days, at long range, doing no harm, and only wasting his ammunition.

He said it was a mistake which many made to suppose that the Brazilian soldiers would not fight. The men were brave enough, but the officers were ignorant and incompetent. He had seen feats of valor performed by Brazilian soldiers equal to anything in his own army ; but there was such a lack of energy, such an indisposition to follow up any temporary advantage which they gained, that it was easy for him to keep them at bay for a long time. His principal hope was that the allies would quarrel among themselves and the alliance be broken up. He believed that the Brazilian exchequer could not long endure such a strain upon it as the war was causing ; that the Empire would become exhausted in its material resources before Paraguay could be overrun and conquered.

I had learned, since my return, that at the time of the cap-



ture of the Argentine steamers at Corrientes there were three Americans on board of them, and that they were prisoners then in Paraguay. I told Lopez that when these men had taken service on board of these steamers war did not exist between Paraguay and the Argentine Republic, and they had no suspicion that such would be the case ; therefore, being American citizens, I thought he ought to release them, and that unless he would do so I should be obliged to call the attention of the United States government to their situation. He insisted that they were lawful prisoners ; that the capture of the steamers had been in accordance with the rules of war ; and that these men, being on board, were as liable to capture and detention as any others, and that by releasing them it would be an acknowledgment of the irregularity of his proceedings in seizing the steamers. I then told him that, as there were very few Americans in the country, I was anxious to do all I could to make their condition as tolerable as possible ; and that, as one of these men was a cook, and another a man who might otherwise be useful to me, and it was no advantage to the government to keep them as prisoners, I should regard it as a favor that they might be so far released that I could employ them as servants, waiving for the time the question of the legality of their capture. After a great deal of hesitation and discussion, in which he said it must be clearly understood that they were not to acquire any rights as members of the legation, but were to be available as prisoners in case of an exchange, my request was granted. Unfortunately, one of the three, on being captured, had denied his nationality, and said he was an Englishman ; therefore I was obliged to surrender all claims to him. Another, who had been sent to labor in the iron-mines at Ibicui, was sent to the capital to be allowed to come into my service. The third, who was a cook, was a colored man by the name of George Bowen, from the city of Washington, a very powerful, active fellow. He was released, and came to live at my house. But I soon found that, instead of getting a diminutive white elephant on my hands, as in the case of Masterman, I



had got a big black one,—a fellow who would get drunk every chance he could get, and would steal anything he could lay his hands on to give away to his numerous female friends, of whom he seemed to have almost as many as Lopez himself. When drunk, he was so quarrelsome that the other servants were afraid to remain in the house with him; and, after repeated warnings and threats, all of which were entirely unavailing, I was obliged to send him away. What became of him afterwards I never knew.

While at the camp on this occasion, I observed a degree of obsequiousness, and an appearance of terror when in the presence of his Excellency, on the part of all, foreigners and natives alike, that I had never witnessed before. When Lopez was in sight, everybody, from his chief of staff to the scullions about the camp, stood or moved uncovered. On one occasion, he asked me to take a short stroll with him, and look at some round shot and some unexploded shells of the enemy that had been picked up in his camp, and also some field-pieces which had been captured a short time before. His staff and a number of other principal officers followed close by. But whether it was as a guard to protect him if I should turn upon him and attempt to strangle him, or as an invariable habit, I am not aware. Though it was about two o'clock, P. M., and therefore the very hottest part of the day, the sun out in full force, yet every man except Lopez and myself stood cap in hand, looking with the sun beating down in full force upon their heads, several of which were quite bald. Upon another occasion,—it was Christmas day, after dinner,—I walked up to visit Colonel Thompson at his house in the orange-grove, close adjoining that of Madam Lynch. Not finding him in, I strolled around where I found the Madam, Colonel Thompson, General Resquin, General Bruguez, and several others engaged in conversation, and was invited to take a seat among them. I did so, and while sitting there conversing I suddenly saw every one around me jump up hastily and stand with a reverent air, all facing in the same direction. Casting my eyes that way, I saw the President at a distance of several



rods, strolling leisurely through the grove. For my part, I let him stroll, and kept my seat, which act of discourtesy would probably have cost the life of any other person in the group.

During all the time I was at the camp the squadron was employed after the manner that it had formerly been accustomed at Paso de la Patria, in bombarding at long range. After the retirement of the Brazilians from Itapiru and the passage of the army into Paraguayan territory, when all could see how easy it would have been for Lopez's whole army to have been captured had the Brazilian admiral possessed the capacity of an ordinary wood-sawyer, he was recalled by the Emperor, and Admiral Ignacio was appointed in his place. The treatment of Tamandaré by the Emperor after his recall was one of the most singular of the many strange episodes of the war. Though his incapacity and his inertness had cost the Empire many millions of dollars and many thousands of lives, and he had left Lopez stronger than he found him, yet on his return to Rio de Janeiro he was welcomed by the Emperor in the most complimentary terms, publicly thanked for his great and valiant services, and decorated with orders, and assured that his whole course was approved by his imperial master. The only difference between Tamandaré and his successor was that the latter was more wasteful of his ammunition. His iron-clads were brought up to within long range of Curupaiti, and there they continued, day after day and month after month, firing shot and shell into the Paraguayan lines, but scarcely ever doing the least harm. I was assured by the English doctors, that though some days the number of shot that fell within the lines was to be counted by thousands, yet the average loss to the Paraguayans, notwithstanding all this waste of war material, did not amount to two persons a day, killed or wounded. One afternoon the bombarding was very heavy, and just about an hour after it ceased in the evening I was sitting with Lopez at the door of his house, when General Diaz, who was in command at Curupaiti, came in to report the day's doings ; and when Lopez



asked him the result of that terrible bombardment we had been hearing through the afternoon, he said that all the harm it had done was to wound one old cow. J

If the allies, in pursuance of their mutual engagement not to lay down their arms until they had driven Lopez from Paraguay, were to prosecute the war in that fashion until they accomplished their object, what misery and protracted suffering must not the Paraguayan people endure !

During this visit, I also called the President's attention to the fact, that, at the time of the sack of Bella Vista, in the province of Corrientes, the stock of a merchant there who claimed to be an American citizen, and had the American flag over his premises, had been taken, and receipts had been given by the officer in command. This merchant had requested me to present his claim, and ask that it might be allowed and paid. Lopez asked me the amount of the receipts. I replied that it was between seven and eight thousand dollars in coin. With a magnificent air he replied : " It matters not whether it is seven thousand or seventy thousand, if you have the receipts you have only to present them and the money will be paid ; present the case to the Minister of Foreign Affairs." Having thus secured the release of my countrymen from imprisonment and obtained an assurance of the adjustment of this claim, and having no other business there, I soon afterwards informed his Excellency that I would return to Asuncion whenever a steamer might be going up the river. To this he replied, in a manner equally magnificent, that it did not matter whether a steamer was going or not ; if I desired to return, that was sufficient ; a steamer would be despatched at any hour that I desired for my accommodation. I prepared to return, therefore, very well satisfied with my trip, and believed that the fears which my English friends had expressed as to the desperate measures to which Lopez might resort were not well founded. But an hour or so before I left the camp to go to Humaita, at about nine o'clock in the evening, I was somewhat staggered when Dr. Stewart came into my house in great excitement, and said his chief commissary, who was no



other than my landlord, the owner of the house I lived in, Don Luis Jara, had been arrested, taken to prison, and put in the stocks. What his crime was no one knew except Lopez, but as he had been somewhat intimate with me during my stay there, and had expressed his great satisfaction that I was occupying his fine house, and had told me that I should be welcome to it so long as I remained in the country, and to everything it contained, that he should ask no rent, but should consider himself fully compensated for the protection that, in certain contingencies, I might give it, I was afraid that, notwithstanding Lopez's great politeness and civility towards me, Don Luis had somehow got into trouble on my account.

I left the same evening for Humaita, and an incident occurred that night that I may here relate, as it served to put me on my guard for the future, as well as to show how completely the secrets of everybody were in the possession of Lopez. While the Shamokin was lying in front of Corrientes, on her way up the river to pass through the blockading squadron, a gentleman whose wife and infant child had been carried off as prisoners to Paraguay at the time that the city was evacuated by the Paraguayan troops came on board the steamer. He brought with him some thirty or forty gold ounces, which he requested me to take, and, if I had the opportunity, to send them to his wife ; and if I could not send the money, to make use of it in purchasing whatever I thought she might most need and which I might be permitted to send her. I took it, and promised to do the best I could with it. While at Asuncion I had learned from Berges that this lady was detained at a small capilla not far above Humaita, and that she was not a close prisoner. Thinking that the money would be more available if changed into silver dollars than in ounces, I took about half the amount in silver in a small tin box, intending to speak to Lopez in regard to the matter, and request that it might be forwarded to the lady. I accordingly, when in conversation with him at Paso Pucu, took up the subject, and said that I had the money with me, and if he had no objection, I would leave it to be sent to her.



He said that if I would leave it with a certain officer at Humaita, it should be forwarded. On returning to Humaita, I found, on taking the box from my trunk, that I had left the key in Asuncion. I proposed to force the lock, or to cut a hole in the side of the box, so that the money could be taken out. The officer, however, said that was unnecessary, and sent immediately and brought an expert, who picked the lock without difficulty. I then thought that, if prepared to pick locks so readily, what security was there in an official seal?

Returning to the capital, the same dreary monotony continued. The *Semanario* would frequently contain accounts of great victories. These victories were generally represented to be the sallies of small bodies of Paraguayan troops, who would attack the enemy in position, and after slaying hundreds or thousands, causing complete havoc and consternation, they would return in good order, and perhaps report the loss of two or three killed and as many wounded. But unfortunately, in spite of all precautions taken by the government to prevent the people of Asuncion from learning the facts, they would frequently hear that what the *Semanario* reported as a great victory was in fact a disastrous repulse, so that from the accounts in the *Semanario* we could judge absolutely nothing of the progress of the war.

In one of these forays some newspapers had been captured, and from them it was ascertained that the United States had offered their mediation in the war, and had sent instructions to the different ministers in Rio, Buenos Aires, and Paraguay, to make the tender of their good offices to the governments to which they were respectively accredited. I had received no official notice of this ; in fact, I had received nothing from beyond the military lines since my arrival in Paraguay. No despatches had come through, and as the allies had made so much resistance to my passage through their lines, it was possible that my correspondence was delayed in the allied camp. I therefore proposed to go through to the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of the allies, the Marques de Caxias, and learn what progress had been made in the pro-



posed mediation, and obtain my despatches or other mail matter, if there were anything of the kind to be found on that side of the line.

On making a suggestion of this kind to Berges, he immediately telegraphed to Lopez, and on the same day I was advised that his Excellency would give me every facility for passing through to the allied camp.



## CHAPTER XII.

Impressment of all Paraguayans into Military Service. — Battle of Estero Bellaco. — Brazilian Chivalry. — Denunciations against Deserters. — Story of Doña Carmelita Cordal. — She publicly renounces her Husband. — Her Confidential Explanations. — Universal Hypocrisy of Paraguayans. — Enforced Contributions. — Dr. Tristan Roca. — Levies upon Foreigners. — Testimonials to Lopez. — The Album, the Flag, and the Sword. — The Women offer all their Jewels. — Their Patriotic Speeches. — Lopez accepts only a Part. — The Women volunteer as Soldiers. — A Tragical Farce.

THE men in Asuncion, and indeed throughout Paraguay, had been enlisted into the army previous to my return. There was not a single able-bodied man in the whole country between the ages of eighteen and sixty who was not, in some capacity or other, in the government service. The recruiting after that was from the very old and the very young, until all from eight to eighty, who were not in prison, were forced into the army. Of the better class of citizens in Asuncion with whom I had been previously acquainted, those engaged in business as merchants, and those having an income from their property sufficient for their support, had all been conscripted in the early part of the year 1866, and sent to the head-quarters as common soldiers. To serve in the ranks, they were required to cast off their shoes and the clothes of a citizen, and don the uniform of a Paraguayan soldier, — white pantaloons, a red shirt, and a soldier's cap. The battalion into which they were drafted was No. 40, and they had but just got fairly organized in the camp at the time of the battle of the 24th of May, in which Lopez received a most terrible defeat. The 25th of May being the anniversary of Argentine independence, General Mitre had resolved on that day to make a general attack along the lines of Lopez, and



the day preceding he was engaged in getting everything ready for a great battle. There was to have been a general review at one o'clock in the day, and the men had but just laid aside their arms to cook their *asado*, when the alarm was given that the Paraguayans were approaching. It was quickly seen that at several different points large bodies of men were marching from the woods, while another force was bearing down directly in front. Instantly the allied ranks were formed for action, and the greatest battle of the war then took place. The Paraguayans fought with the courage of desperation, and their shock was received with equal valor, until the advancing legions were hurled back at all points. Lopez, at a safe distance, was watching the course of the battle, and seeing that all his plans had miscarried, and that his troops were being cut to pieces, he sounded a retreat. The retreat was more disastrous than the attack, as the Argentine artillery was in such a position as to rake the only open space of ground through which they must retire. President Mitre was in command at this time, and why he did not follow up his advantage has always been a mystery. Had any of the Brazilian generals been in command, there would have been no mystery about it, for they always practised a kind of chivalry unknown in other wars, and whenever they had gained a victory, routed the enemy and driven them back in consternation, they were so extremely chivalrous that they would not pursue their advantage, until the retreating foe could have time to reorganize and prepare for another advance. In this action, Lopez had given the post of honor to the Fortieth Battalion, that is, he had placed it where there was the greatest danger, and where it was supposed he had intended that they should be killed off. Whether that was his intention or not, such was the fact, as very few ever returned alive. Two or three, however, were taken prisoners; and as soon as this fact was known they were denounced as deserters in the *Semanario*, and confiscation of their property was threatened. One of these unfortunate prisoners I had met while I was in Corrientes waiting for a gunboat. His name was Fernando Cordal. He had



been desperately wounded in the action, having received three balls in different parts of his body.

On reaching Asuncion I learned, greatly to my disgust and horror, that he had been denounced as a traitor, and that his wife, who was the daughter of Don Andres Gill, for many years the principal secretary and adviser of Carlos Antonio Lopez, had been threatened with exile and confiscation of all her property, and that to avert such a fate she had published a card denouncing her husband and anathematizing him as a traitor and deserter. I found, indeed, that all those whose near kindred had been taken prisoners or in any way had escaped from the power of the allies were obliged to denounce them and repudiate them, or else be driven, proscribed and destitute, far into the interior. Notwithstanding this renunciation of her husband, to whom she was fondly attached, Doña Carmelita was constantly in dread of being stripped of her whole fortune, which had been considerable, and sent, like many others, into the wilderness. When I reached Asuncion, I narrated what I had known of him; I told everybody that I had seen her husband in Corrientes desperately wounded; that he had received his wounds when gallantly fighting the enemy, and was finally overpowered and taken to the hospital, where he died a few days after. These facts being made known to Lopez, Doña Carmelita was allowed to remain at the capital. She was one of our nearest neighbors, and a woman of superior intelligence, very sprightly and vivacious, and from her I was able to learn a great many things in regard to the condition of affairs around us, and the real sentiments of the people towards Lopez. She used to frighten me with the stories she told me of his atrocities, which she said were known to all her acquaintances; she said that the hypocrisy among the people in their professions of devotion and loyalty was beyond belief, it was universal; and they were in such constant fear and anxiety that they would be willing to surrender everything in the world but life and health, so that the Lopez family might be driven from Paraguay. She said: "They have taken our



husbands, our fathers, and our sons; they have taken the greater part of our fortunes, and will take all if allowed to remain. They are welcome to everything, provided they will leave us simply our lives. But," said she, "Lopez is a great tiger; we all fear the last stroke of his paw. He will kill us all, if possible, in his dying gasp." When I asked her how she could denounce her husband as she did, she said that no Paraguayan would respect her the less for that, neither would her husband, if he were alive, and that the lives of herself and her three children probably were dependent upon some such humiliating act. When I asked her how she dared to talk to me in that way, when she knew so well the character of Lopez, and that if it were known she would be subjected to the most terrible fate, she replied that she knew to whom she was talking, and that if I were acquainted with all the better class of ladies in Asuncion I should find that, without exception, they entertained the same sentiments. I am thus particular in speaking of the revelations of Doña Carmelita, as it will afford a clew to many things which occurred afterwards. When the day of the general arrest, imprisonment, and torture of all the foreigners and all the better class of Paraguayans came, they were questioned in regard to each other and of what they had said of his Excellency, the good President, Marshal Lopez, and they were tortured until they would not only admit everything which had been charged against them, but would accuse others; thus with the suffering from the grillos, the straps and lashes, and the cepo uruguayana, when in their agony and weakness they could endure no longer, they sought to put an end to their woes by accusing their former companions and friends, and revealing not only all they had ever said against the Lopez family but a great deal more, and even going so far as to accuse persons with whom they had no confidences and scarcely acquaintanceship.

4 The system of enforced contributions had begun at a very early period of the war. At the meeting of the Congress which declared war against the Argentine Republic, it had



been voted that the government should bestow upon Lopez some insignia of honor, leaving it for him to decide at any time what that should be, and soon after it would be given out, in a sort of semi-official manner, that the people were to present him with some token of their regard. The initiation of any movement of this kind would usually be undertaken by the wives of certain foreigners in the country, who were on intimate terms with Madam Lynch. The two most forward in this business were the wife of Sinforiano Cacerés, formerly partner of Madam Lynch in the importation and sale of cattle, and the wife of Dr. Tristan Roca, a refugee from Bolivia. Both these men were on all public occasions most enthusiastic defenders and eulogists of Lopez and the Paraguayan cause. Dr. Roca, who was a man of education, and had formerly been a member of the Bolivian government, was invariably present at all public meetings, and made speeches glorifying the great hero of the age. He also contributed many vigorous articles to the *Semanario*, in the same strain, and became the editor of a sort of newspaper called the *Centinela*, which was prepared expressly for the army, and was distributed about the camp for the benefit of the soldiery. The ball being once set in motion, whoever was invited to contribute was, to all intents and purposes, compelled to do so. As soon as it had become generally known that the people were to be assessed for any offering, a public meeting would be called of the ladies of Asuncion, and then a formal proposition would be made that they should all unite in contributing some testimonial of gratitude for the protection that the great Lopez had afforded them, and of admiration for his heroic services in the field, in defending his country against the invasion of a barbarous foe. As early as 1866, the government employees raised a national subscription to present him an album with solid gold covers, ornamented with precious stones, in a gold box, and with an equestrian statue of gold on it. Shortly afterwards the Paraguayan women united their offerings to present him a magnificent flag embroidered in gold, with diamonds and rubies, and a silver staff, with mount-



ings to correspond. A sash, as the insignia of the head of the National Order of Merit, on a similar scale of extravagant value, was added to the preceding testimonial. But a few weeks were allowed to the ladies after the people had been assessed for the sum requested to make this costly offer, before another proposition would be started in a similar way. At one time it was proposed to present him with a sword of honor and a crown of laurel-leaves, all in gold. The sheath was likewise to be of gold, and over this sheath was to be another, likewise of gold. Everything was to be elaborately worked by the goldsmiths of Asuncion, of which there were several very competent and skilful. Besides this, the people were being continually assessed for public demonstrations in the way of balls, at which all were expected to attend, and pronounce eulogistic discourses in praise of their great protector. These things were repeated so often, that at last they became absolutely disgusting. Some of the foreigners who kept their money and valuables in my house, whenever anything of this kind had been resolved upon would come and take away sufficient to pay their assessment ; for though called by another name, they had no hesitation in telling me that it was an assessment, and they must either pay or go to prison.

The Paraguayan women of all classes, as I have said in another place, had, considering their general poverty, an incredible amount of jewelry. It had been so from the old colonial times. But this process of extorting their wealth from them by pretended voluntary contributions was too slow for Lopez and Madam Lynch, and they resolved to lay their hands on all the jewelry in the country, and the plan of operations for accomplishing this object was eminently worthy of the parties for whose benefit it was conceived. First, it was hinted, after the usual manner, that the women of Paraguay proposed to contribute all their jewelry to the state, in order to furnish his Excellency the President the means of carrying on the war, and defending them from the barbarous enemy. A meeting was called to take the subject into consideration, at which the ladies of the capital, were to make speeches, and to ex-



press their desire to lay at the feet of their great defender all their treasures, and even to take up arms, if he would permit them, and allow them the privilege of entering the ranks as soldiers. The speeches made on these occasions were always published in the *Semanario*. They were usually written by priests, or by some of those men employed about the government offices, like Benitez, and by such strangers as were detained in the country, and who, being unable to obtain a livelihood in any other way, were glad to eke out a subsistence in this degrading work. The most prolific of these writers were the Argentine Colonel Coriolano Marquez, and Dr. Tristan Roca, of Bolivia. Almost simultaneously with this movement in the capital, a similar demonstration was made throughout the towns and districts of the interior, and from all the capillas in the country there came letters for publication in the *Semanario*, stating that the women had no sooner heard of this proposition than they had come together in great enthusiasm, and demanded that they should be permitted to join in this offering. In what manner their jewels or money could be used for the national defence did not appear, as the treasures contributed could not be sent out of the country, nor could they be used for the purchase of anything that could be brought from the exterior. Everything in the way of provisions or clothing, all that could contribute in any way to supply the army, had been ruthlessly taken from the outset, without question. Their horses and their cattle had been taken; every house had been ransacked, and the people robbed of their bedding and their clothes not in actual use; and even their kettles, in which they cooked their scanty food, were carried off to the army head-quarters. The people knew that all their contributions would go to swell the private fortunes of Lopez and his paramour, and yet they were forced to dissemble, and to feign that they contributed everything willingly, in the full belief that it was to enable the Marshal President to defend their country and drive back a dreaded and barbarous foe.

At the meeting held in Asuncion an address to the Presi-



dent was adopted, expressive of their gratitude to him, and of their desire that, while their sons, brothers, and husbands were fighting in the ranks under his gallant leadership, they might also be allowed to contribute in every way to the general cause, and requesting Lopez to permit them thus to strengthen his arms with their humble contributions. The President replied in a formal letter, which was published in the *Semanario* of the 8th of September, 1867. In this, after expressing his gratitude to the fair daughters of Paraguay for their patriotism in thus offering their treasures, he said: "The national resources, and those that the patriotism of my citizens has placed in my hands, have been until now sufficient to meet our necessities, and I expect that they will be; yet in order to put a climax to the great strife, and that we may sustain and save the country with its honor and its rights, God protecting us and the valorous legions that fight at my orders, these considerations that I am pleased to offer to the deputation of the signers have decided me to accept but a twentieth part of their patriotic offering, in order that I may issue the first national gold coin, having in this the object of exhibiting to posterity the sublime virtue with which the daughters of the country have distinguished themselves in a time of trial, rather than to seek for a circulating medium that may serve for commerce."

Agents were immediately appointed to receive the five per cent indicated by the letter of the President; and all the women of the country, rich and poor alike, were obliged to take their jewels to those agents and have them weighed, a twentieth part of their value contributed, and a full list of all the rest taken. The same thing was done in all the different districts of the entire state, so that when the whole affair was concluded Lopez had received five per cent of all the jewelry in Paraguay, and, more important than that, he then knew how to lay his hands on all the rest. During the time that this work was going on, the different districts of the interior were required to send in their delegates, two or three from each partido, to deliver the lists of those who were to participate in



the festivities of the capital and to make patriotic speeches in behalf of the ladies of their particular districts. They were detained in the capital for several weeks, and during all this time they were required to be in attendance day and evening at public meetings, at balls, or in the various ways which were dictated to them, in order that they might show their patriotism and their gratitude to the great hero, the immortal Lopez.

Great pains were taken to make it appear that the women, in offering to volunteer as soldiers, had acted of their own free will. The object in this, like that of many other of the popular demonstrations, could not have been for any effect that it could have in Paraguay, for neither Lopez nor Madam Lynch could have been so entirely ignorant of the real feelings of the people as to suppose for a moment that they were acting, either in giving up their jewels or in volunteering as soldiers, except under fear and compulsion. The only object must have been for the impression that would be created abroad by having it published to the world that even the women of Paraguay were so patriotic, so devoted to the cause which the great Lopez was defending, that they offered to give up their jewels to enable him to defend his country, and to bear arms as soldiers in the field. At the first meeting which was held by them, for which everything had been pre-arranged by Madam Lynch, after numerous speeches in which all spoke of the great sacrifices and great heroism of the father of the country, and of the many blessings that he had conferred upon them, which it would never be possible for them to repay by any services which they could render, it was proposed that a committee should be appointed to request one more signal favor from his Excellency. This was that they might be permitted to take up arms and enter the ranks as soldiers. Such a pathetic appeal was obviously too much for the tender heart of Lopez; he could not resist it, and throughout the state companies were organized. A style of uniform was prescribed for the volunteers, and officers from the army, lieutenants or ensigns who had been in the hospital and



were convalescing, were assigned to the duty of teaching them the military evolutions. The only weapon which they were instructed in the use of was the lance. Fire-arms were never put into their hands. But in the capital, and at all the different capillas of the state, the women between the ages of sixteen and forty were conscripted. In the capital, for some reason or other, those women who belonged to the upper classes, or what was called the *alta categoria*, were not called upon to volunteer. But there were no such exemptions in the interior, and the daughters of the most wealthy and respectable citizens were required, equally with the slaves and peons, to resort to the capillas, don the uniform, take the lance, and learn the drill. None of the companies thus organized were ever sent to the army as soldiers. Hundreds and thousands of them were sent as laborers, where they were required to do all kinds of menial labor, to keep the camps in order, to cut and bring wood, and even to work in the trenches.

While the Paraguayans of all classes were in these various ways demonstrating their loyalty, their patriotism and devotion to Lopez, the foreigners were not neglected. They too were also reminded that popular demonstrations of gratitude would be acceptable, and there were not wanting those who were eager to take the initiative, hoping thereby to win greater favors and higher consideration either from Lopez or Madam Lynch. In the month of December, 1866, therefore, the foreigners proposed that they would give a grand ball at the Club. The preliminary steps were taken for an entertainment which it was intended should be in all its appointments in the best style possible under the circumstances in which the country was situated. A subscription-list was circulated, and all foreigners having any social position contributed, the most of them with a liberality far beyond their ability. A list of the subscribers is appended, and it will be seen that it was signed by fifty-four persons.\* Of these but one, Mr. Porter C. Bliss,

\* Every one of the following list of foreigners, who, in December, 1866, signed a testimonial of gratitude to Lopez, is now dead, except Mr. Bliss ; and all but two



survived at the close of the war. All the others (with the exception of José Solis, who was killed in the last battle of the war) were executed or perished from torture, or from the exposure and hardships to which they were subjected by him in whose honor they had proposed to give this proof of their gratitude and regard.

The men being all taken for the army, all the farm labor throughout the country was performed by the women. Though nearly all the cattle and horses were taken for the service of the state, yet one or two yoke of oxen was usually left for each family, that the women might be enabled to plough the ground and plant the maize and the mandioca, which when grown was mostly taken for the use of the troops. The women were compelled to yoke the oxen and to plough the fields; the butchering at the slaughter-yards near the capital was also performed by women, and in the market-place of Asuncion none but women were to be seen, except the police, who were always present to overhear and report any remark of discontent or impatience at the hardships to which they

or three (who had died previously) figure in Resquin's Diary as *traitors*, who were executed, or who *died in prison*, or as it was sometimes added, with grim sarcasm, *of a natural death* :—

Tristan Roca, Bolivian; Porter C. Bliss, American; José Solis, Spaniard; Antonio Rebaudi, Italian; Antonio Susini, Italian; Pedro Anglade, French; Ignacio de Galarraga, Spaniard; Antonio de las Carreras, Oriental; Francisco Rodriguez Larreta, Oriental; Antonio Nin y Reyes, Oriental; José M. Vilas, Spaniard; Ramon Babañoli, Italian; José Balet, French; Pedro Solari, Italian; Carlos Reiso, Italian; Pelayo Azcona, Spaniard; Francisco Vilas, Spaniard; Emilio Neumann, German; José Maria Leite Pereira, Portuguese Consul; Eugenio Matheu Aguiar, Spaniard; Gustavo Haman, German; Joaquin Romaguera, Spaniard; Lizardo Baca, Bolivian; Juan Agustin Uribe, Spaniard; Narciso Prada, Spaniard; Francisco da C. Leite Falcao, Brazilian; Hipolito Perez, Spaniard; Rafael Peña, Bolivian; Nicolas Ribera, Bolivian; Andres Dellepiane, Italian; Augustin Piaggio, Italian; Venanio Uribe, Spaniard; Martin Madrenas, Spaniard; Pedro Falca, Spaniard; Pio Pozzoli, Italian; James Manlove, American; Narciso Lasserre, French; Baldomero Ferreira, Spaniard; Federico Anavitarte, Oriental; Faustino J. Martinez, Oriental; Ignacio Ruiz, Spaniard; José T. Ramirez, Argentine; José M. Cano, Argentine; Nicolas Susini, Italian; Isidro Codina, Spaniard; Joaquin Vargas Aldado, Oriental; Teodoro Gaúna, Argentine; Pedro N. Rolon, Argentine; Federico Hoffman, German; Antonio Vasconcellos, Portuguese; Julio Veia, Italian; Simon Fidanza, Italian; Estevan Pulé, Italian; Angel Silva, Argentine.



were subjected. An expression of a wish that the war might end, if overheard, would surely send a woman to prison, several instances of which came to my knowledge. More frequently, however, such enemies to the state would be sent to the army, where they were subjected to the most revolting treatment.



## CHAPTER XIII.

An Offer of Mediation. — Voyage to Head-Quarters. — Conversation with Benigno Lopez. — Interviews with the Marshal. — Exchange of Messages with Caxias. — Lopez's Hopes and Fears. — The Passage through the Lines. — Rudeness of Pancho Lynch. — Reception by Caxias. — His Reply to the Offer of Mediation. — Discussion of the Chances of the War. — The Polish Officer's Map. — Return to Paso Pucu. — A Breakfast with Lopez. — Anger of the Marshal. — Extract from my Diary. — Final Interview with Lopez. — He announces a Memorable Resolution. — He will never surrender. — His Place in History secure.

HAVING arranged with Berges to go a second time to the army head-quarters, and then to cross over to the camp of the allies, I was informed that the little steamer Olimpo would be ready to take me to Humaita on the afternoon of the 7th of March. I accordingly went aboard, where I found the President's younger brother, Don Benigno, who was going as my fellow-passenger. On our way down the river we talked at considerable length of the situation of affairs, of the prospects of Paraguay for the future, and the probable issue of the war. We were both of us very guarded, and were distrustful of each other. I took it for granted that whatever I might say to Benigno would be reported by him to his brother, and I supposed that he expected the same of me. Knowing him to be much more familiar with the country than myself, I inquired about the natural difficulties that would interfere with the advance of the allies, and we speculated as to what would probably be their next move, and, if successful, what would be the succeeding step, and what would be the result provided it were disastrous, like the battle of Curupaiti. We also talked a good deal in regard to the resources of the Brazilians, and I remember well that Benigno ✓



✓ told me that Brazil had already contracted such a debt in Europe, that her creditors could not afford to have her defeated, as if she were not to succeed, and her armies were to be conquered and driven out of Paraguay, the nation would probably repudiate the debt which they had already contracted. I remember that the creditors were compared by one of us to a man who should commence to dig a well, thinking to find water within a few feet of the surface, and who, having once begun, would be unwilling to lose the labor already performed, and so would continue digging away until he had gone twenty times deeper than he had anticipated would be necessary.) Though I had known that Benigno had formerly been on bad terms with his brother, I had supposed that harmony between them was restored ; and as I had learned that at the public meetings and festivals he had made several speeches very eulogistic of his brother, and had been decorated with the Order of Merit, I supposed that he was no longer under a cloud, and would report anything that I might say with as much fidelity to his master as any of the most trusted spies. We reached Humaita on the morning of the 9th, and, being furnished with a horse and guide, I proceeded to the camp of Paso Pucu, which I reached at about eleven o'clock. I was assigned the same house in which I had lived when at the camp some two months before, and, after getting some breakfast, I had an interview with his Excellency. He seemed greatly pleased that I was going through to the camp of Caxias, and seemed to have high hopes that something greatly to his advantage would result from the proposed mediation of the United States. I anticipated, however, very little from it, and so I told him ; but, as I had learned that my government had sent instructions to me, I was anxious to obtain them, and if through mediation or in any other way any avenue could be discovered through which the parties to the war could retire from it, I should do all in my power to attain that end. As the allies had made so much objection to my passing through their lines on a previous occasion, and as I did not know how near to the advanced outposts the



head-quarters of the Marques de Caxias might be, or whether I should have a personal interview with him, I prepared a letter previous to setting out to send him, in case I was subjected to any detention, or prevented from going immediately to his head-quarters. In this letter I set forth the object of my visit, stating that, not having received my correspondence for a long time, and having heard that my government had offered its mediation in the war, I was extremely anxious to learn what the probabilities were that such mediation would be accepted on the part of the allies in the same manner as I had good reason to believe it would be accepted by the government of Paraguay.

During the time that I remained at the Paraguayan head-quarters I had several interviews with Lopez, and conversed with him with considerable freedom. I also talked a great deal with those Englishmen who were living at his head-quarters, Dr. Stewart, Colonel Thompson, and Mr. Valpy, and told them all that, with what I could learn from Lopez and from themselves, I had little or no confidence in being able to effect what was expected of me ; that from what I knew of the temper and determination of the allies, they would not accept the mediation of any nation ; and that I greatly feared if I were to go through, and my mission should be unsuccessful, it would render the situation of us all more desperate than it had ever been. Still there was a chance that it might be otherwise, and as all were hoping for so much, I would go. Accordingly, on Monday, the 11th of March, a flag of truce was despatched to the front, with a message to the Marques de Caxias announcing that the American Minister was within the Paraguayan lines, and desirous of passing through to his head-quarters. An answer was promptly returned, stating that the Minister would be at full liberty to enter his camp, that firing would be suspended, and he might come with an escort of a whole battalion to the Paraguayan front, and no one would be injured. Lopez, when he received this answer, affected to be greatly indignant, and said : " Why should he say that a whole battalion may go as an escort to



the Paraguayan front? Of course the whole army may go if I say so. It was meant as an insult." To this I replied that I considered it in exactly the contrary sense; that the Marques de Caxias intended to say that if the American Minister wished to pass through his lines, and a whole battalion were to go as his escort, he would not open fire upon it. Lopez, however, still pretended that Caxias was meditating some trick, some fraud, and that his object was to induce him to send a force in that direction in some exposed position, and then open fire upon it. I told him that I entertained no fears of that kind, that I should be willing to go, and did not believe there would be the least danger. He then gave orders, that, if there was any firing in the vicinity of the road which we were to take, the escort should return. And it appeared to me that he was quite willing that there should be something of that kind, so that I should have occasion to make a complaint to my government that the flag of truce had not been respected, but that, when the Brazilians knew I was approaching their outposts, they deliberately fired upon me. At about two o'clock in the day, the escort that was to accompany me was ready. I was provided with a carriage and about thirty men, among whom was Colonel Thompson, who rode in the carriage with me. Among the other persons in the escort was the oldest son of Madam Lynch, who was then about fourteen years old, and went by the name of Pancho Lopez. It was a winding, difficult road through which we had to pass, and it was some two hours before we were met by the escort which had been sent by the Marques de Caxias to meet us, and accompany me to his headquarters. When the two escorts met, the officers and men in each mingled together, and fell into conversation in regard to the prospects for peace. Young Pancho Lopez, though but about fourteen years of age, was very forward in expressing his opinion, and was so insolent to some of the officers from the other side, that it would not have been strange had he received a slap in the face in return for his ill-manners. This would have been followed by a general fight, and such a catas-



trophe was averted by the presence of mind of an Oriental officer, who turned to us and told us to start along, while he alone would stay to dismiss their Paraguayan friends. Madam Lynch afterwards professed to be greatly mortified at the rudeness of her son, and the evidence of ill-breeding he had exhibited on an occasion that demanded the strictest courtesy and propriety.

Passing along through the trenches of the allies, the escort took me through the centre of their camp to the house of the Marques at Tuyuti, where I was courteously received by him. I told him, in such poor Spanish as I could command, the object of my visit to his head-quarters, and said that, as I had not been certain of an immediate personal interview with him, I had, before leaving the Paraguayan camp, prepared a letter to send to him, and that from that he would learn the object of my visit more clearly than I could explain it to him verbally, and that I would, therefore, deliver it to him. Before opening it, he asked me if I had come at the instance of Lopez, or on my own motion. I replied that I had come entirely on my own business, and had brought no proposition or message from the Commander-in-Chief of the Paraguayan army. He sent the letter to be translated, and I then asked him if any despatches or other communications had been received at his head-quarters for me, as I had heard that my government had offered its mediation between the belligerents. He said that nothing whatever had been received. I then asked him if there was any truth in the rumor, which I had heard while in Paraguay, that General Asboth, United States Minister at Buenos Aires, was coming to the seat of war. He immediately went to his desk and took out a file of letters, spread them on the table before him, and, as if intending that I should look over the part which he pointed out with his finger as he read it, and which appeared to be an official letter, he read substantially this: that the American Minister in Buenos Aires, General Alexander Asboth, having received instructions in regard to the mediation of the United States in the existing war, had proposed to go up to the seat of war and pass



through to the camp of President Lopez to confer with his colleague there, Mr. Washburn, but that they (the writers or authors of the letter) had seen the admiral of the American squadron and had confidentially arranged it with him so that the Minister at Buenos Aires could not go on the gunboat which was to be sent to carry up the despatches of the Minister in Paraguay.

Near the house of the Marques was a very nice tent of heavy pilot-cloth, elegantly finished, and provided with cots and everything necessary to make its occupant as comfortable as possible. This tent, apparently, was reserved for visitors to whom the Marques was disposed to show particular attention. I was told that it was at my disposition, and that I should be expected to take my meals with his Excellency. That evening we talked until late of various matters; but as Lopez kept all his affairs so entirely to himself, I had no information to give him in regard to his strength or resources; and had I known all about them, I could not, with propriety, have communicated anything to him. The next day a member of the Marques's staff, a Pole, whom I had previously met at Corrientes, and who had been an officer in the American war and on the staff of General Grant, brought me some newspapers. From them I learned that the offer of mediation by the United States had not been favorably received by the allies, and I was confirmed in my impression that my mission would amount to nothing. The Marques, who was out at daylight next morning inspecting his troops and his fortifications, returned about ten o'clock, and at eleven we had breakfast, after which I received a formal answer to my note which I had delivered the day before. In this reply Caxias assumed diplomatic as well as military functions. He stated, in regard to the offer of mediation by the United States, that it would never be accepted by the allies; that they had been forced into the war by the unlawful and barbarous acts of Lopez, and would never treat with him; that he must leave the country, and that when he would do so the way would be open for a speedy and honorable peace to all parties. He concluded his letter



by intimating to me that my visit was not particularly welcome, and that I need not come across the lines again, if I had no other object in view than to obtain my correspondence, as he would send to me directly anything to my address which might come into his hands. I was very busy during the day, writing despatches to the Secretary of State, and also to General Asboth at Buenos Aires, and General Webb at Rio. To all of them I complained of the strange conduct of Admiral Godon, who, it seems, not satisfied with aiding the allies in detaining me, was still in confidential relations with them, and was intriguing to defeat the plan of mediation which had been proposed by our government, and had refused to give passage on a gunboat to General Asboth at a time when the latter thought that if he could have the full co-operation of the squadron such mediation might have been accepted.

In the course of conversation with Caxias, I asked him what Lopez could do if the allies would not treat with him under any circumstances. He could not escape through their lines, nor was there any way open by which he could get out of Paraguay and go to Europe or the United States. He was completely at bay, and in that situation he would probably fight to the last, and would give the allies a great deal of trouble before he was conquered. To this the Marques replied, quoting a Portuguese proverb to this effect: "Always provide a golden bridge for a fleeing enemy"; from which I inferred that, whenever Lopez should be prepared to leave Paraguay, he would have his own terms as to the amount of money he should receive in return for so great a service. The Polish engineer had told me the same thing during the day in regard to the resources of Lopez, and I had requested him to give me a sketch of the Paraguayan encampment. He replied that he could not do so without the permission of the Commander-in-Chief, which if he could obtain, he would very gladly furnish me with the complete plan of the country, including not only the camp of Lopez, but the whole region from Curupaiti to Villa Franca.



Having learned that the proffered mediation of the United States was not to be accepted by the allies, and not finding any despatches or other correspondence for me, I determined to return to the Paraguayan camp on the following day, the second after my arrival. Having advised the Marques of my intention, he assured me that everything should be ready, and an escort and flag of truce would be ready to start at seven o'clock, A. M. It was a beautiful clear morning when we were ready to start. The Marques sent his chief of staff, with his own body-guard, consisting of some forty men, as an escort. The men were all dressed in a very rich and peculiar uniform, and were well mounted. Bidding the Marques adieu, and expressing my thanks for his courtesy, I started to repass the lines. While on the way I was overtaken by the Polish engineer, who gave me a tracing of the camp of Lopez, giving the position of the batteries, the troops, the head-quarters, and all the defences which it could oppose to the advance of the allies. He told me that I was at perfect liberty to make any use of it I pleased, that it had been prepared for me by permission of the Marques, and was in no respect to be considered as confidential. The inference that I drew from this was, that the Marques hoped that by showing Lopez how entirely the allies were possessed of the facts in regard to his situation, he would see that he was completely in their power, and would consider that the best thing he could do would be to make terms; and that the hint of the proverb he had quoted the day before about a golden bridge was but an intimation that, if I could hire Lopez to go away, any amount of money that might be required would be at my disposal.

We passed along by the same road which we had come over two days before, and in the same place where the two escorts had met on that occasion we encountered the advance guard of the Paraguayans. Evidently my return had not been expected so soon, as only some three or four men with horses were at the front. The officer in command of the small force was Captain Andres Maciel, one of the many afterwards executed by Lopez as traitors, as appears from Resquin's Diary.



I reached the head-quarters of Lopez at about ten o'clock in the morning, and had barely time to attend to my toilet when I received an invitation to take breakfast with him at his house. I found him at his table, where were present with him such friends as he was in the habit of treating with most consideration, among whom were the Bishop, General Barrios, General Bruguez, Dr. Stewart, Coloner Wisner, young Pancho Lopez, and one or two others. I could see that all were intensely anxious to know the result of my mission, and I wondered very much why Lopez had not sent the others away until he should learn from me what I had seen and heard. About the first question he asked me was in regard to the political condition of affairs in Buenos Aires. He had inferred from some newspapers that had been captured, or from the declarations of certain prisoners who had been tortured into making such statements as would please him, that a revolution in Buenos Aires was imminent ; that General Mitre, on his return from the army, after having resigned the chief command to the Marques de Caxias, had been received with great coldness by the people of Buenos Aires ; that there was a general clamor for peace ; and that the feeling against a further continuance of the war was such that the alliance must very soon be given up. This delusive hope I was obliged to dispel. I told him that General Mitre had been received with acclamations by all classes of people in Buenos Aires ; that nothing had occurred to change the character of the situation ; and that, so far as I could see, the allies would continue the war indefinitely ; nor could I learn that the Brazilians were experiencing any new difficulty in raising money abroad. He inquired particularly about the Marques de Caxias, and what sort of a man he seemed to be. I told him that he was an old man who appeared to be very active and an excellent disciplinarian ; that the allied camp was in a much better condition than I had ever seen it before, though I had visited it several times. I told him that he had treated me with courtesy, and that I had taken my meals at his table ; that he certainly did not maintain that Spartan simplicity in his mode of life which it



was supposed was incident to the life of a soldier, as he had an abundance of the finest mutton and beef, which must have been brought from a great distance, and also very fine fruits that must have come from Montevideo. Long afterwards I learned that what I then said in regard to the sumptuous table of the Marques caused very great offence to the Marshal; that he often used to speak of it with bitterness, and seemed to think that I had intended to reflect on the poverty of his table and the scantiness of his resources by comparing the repast before me with that which I had witnessed on the table of the Commander-in-Chief of the allied army. He did not evince, however, at that time, any displeasure at what I said; and as my remarks were intended to be rather complimentary than otherwise to the Paraguayans, who could carry on war without those luxuries, and to reflect on the Brazilian officers for giving more attention to their own comfort than to the severe duties of the soldier, I never suspected that I had given any offence, and it was not until after I had left Paraguay that I learned that my conversation on that occasion was one of the most serious charges that he ever had to make against me. I will here quote from my journal, or rather from the memoranda which I wrote immediately after I left the camp of Marshal Lopez to return to Asuncion, and while I was on board the steamer on my way up the river. The conversations which I had had with him I then thought might be of some historic value at a future time, and I accordingly wrote out from memory, within a day or two afterwards, the substance of what was said at our different interviews.

“ After a little time he sent away all the rest, and requested me to remain. I then told him that the proposed mediation had been rejected, and that so far as I could see there was no prospect whatever of peace; that the war must go on indefinitely until one or the other of the belligerent parties was utterly destroyed. I gave him the plans of his own grounds given me by the Polish engineer, which showed, as I thought, that they were well informed in regard to his situation. He



looked at the plans, and said that they were much better informed than he supposed ; there were some mistakes in it, but nevertheless they had means of obtaining information within his lines which he had not suspected. I also told him that General Osorio was to cross the Parana at Encarnacion with ten thousand troops, mostly cavalry. He replied that he had heard of that before, except that the number was only five thousand. He said that he had no fears of anything that Osorio could do at that point. He had formed a high opinion, as indeed had everybody else, of the military capacity of Osorio, and were he to join forces with Caxias at Tuyuti, he would have reason to apprehend serious difficulty ; but that if he attempted to cross the Parana near Encarnacion, and to advance towards Asuncion, he would find nothing but a desert to cross, with roads at that season almost impassable, and with many gorges, where he could be cut to pieces by a greatly inferior force. He seemed to be considerably cast down at the report I gave him of the situation of the allies, particularly at the continued popularity of Mitre, and requested me to call and see him again, as he wished to have further conversation with me. To my inquiry when it would be most convenient for me to return to the capital, he replied that one steamer, a small one, would start that afternoon, and that the next evening the Ipora, which had very good accommodations, would also start for the capital, and I could take my choice as to which steamer I would take passage on. I concluded to wait for the Ipora. I saw him again that evening but a short time when others were present, and we had no particular conversation. The next day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, I went to see him again, and we had a long private interview. He commenced discussing his situation ; said he knew it was very grave, but assumed to be confident that if the allies were to attack him he could repulse them at every point, yet he showed that he felt his chances of final success to be very slight. The odds against him were very great, and if the allies could hold together long enough, and sustain the enormous expenses to which they were subjected by the war, it



was probable that, sooner or later, they might overrun and conquer Paraguay. He then went on to express his surprise and regret that foreign governments had not come to his rescue. He said that no one of them, except the United States, had ever shown any interest in him or his cause, and the United States had not done much. It had two ministers of age and experience, one in Brazil and one in Buenos Aires, both of whom were acting in the interest of the allies, while the Minister to Paraguay was but young in diplomatic experience, and his representations did not have the weight with the government that those of his colleagues did. Besides, they were nearer home, and could communicate more frequently with the government than I could, and, by denying my representations, could circumvent anything that I might do unfavorable to the cause of the allies. He said he saw very clearly what the purpose of Caxias was in sending the plans of the Paraguayan camp to him, and that his remark of the golden bridge to a fleeing enemy was but a hint to him that there would be no difficulty in his getting out of the country with all the money he might ever need. That, he said, he should never do. He would fight to the last, and fall with his last guard. His bones must rest in his own country, and his enemies should only have the satisfaction of beholding his tomb; he would not give them the pleasure of seeing him a fugitive in Europe or elsewhere; he would sooner die than be a second Rosas. If the worst came, it was to be no surrender, but all were to fight until they were killed; that he was prepared to resort to more extreme measures than any one imagined, if necessary; it was better to fall after his whole people had been destroyed, than treat on the condition of leaving the country. Unless he should succeed and come off conqueror, there was no future for him, nor did he want to live. Whatever of glory or fame would result from the war, long protracted against odds infinitely superior, was already his, and he would never be deprived of it; his fame in history was, at any rate, secure. It was not his ambition to rank with any South American hero like San Martin, Bolivar, or Belgrano; they



were persons for whom he had no respect, nor had he any desire to be classed with men who had made such a contemptible figure in history ; but it was his ambition to have his name enrolled on the same page of history with those of Washington and Lincoln ; that he would, if necessary, crown his triumphs with an act of heroism, and perish at the head of his legions. He had labored so long for his country, and with such self-abnegation, had been sustained by his people so bravely and with such free and spontaneous will, that all these things must justify him in history, and give him a place such as no South American hero ever held. He said it was glory enough for him, while living, to have three nations making war so long against his single arm, and that the world must then be wondering at the defence he was making ; and why none of the other nations of the world, especially the United States, did not come to his aid, was to him a matter of the greatest surprise and mortification ; but that if they persisted in leaving him to fight it out without their assistance, on them would be the responsibility of the disasters and miseries that might result from the prolongation of the war."

I could hardly believe that the man was in earnest when he spoke in this way ; that he could really be such a dolt and fool as not to know that the people who were fighting under his orders were but abject slaves, and obeyed only from fear, and that there was not the least particle of free will or independence of thought tolerated in the country ; forgetting that if at that moment he were to learn of a single individual in the whole state who had ventured to advise that he should make the best attainable peace, he would order him to be shot before the next morning. It convinced me, however, that in his utter selfishness, his conceit and vanity, he would sacrifice every Paraguayan before he would consent to leave the country ; and I saw that the fate which he had resolved upon for the Paraguayan people would, unless he died in the meanwhile, certainly be theirs but for one thing. I knew that he was a coward, and I believed that, sooner or later, he would treat in time to save his own life ; that his talk about falling



at last at the head of his legions was all bombast. I knew he had never exposed himself to any danger when he could possibly avoid it, and I did not believe he ever would do so ; and in conversations which I had after that with Dr. Stewart and others, in speaking of his vaunting resolution to perish at the head of his legions, it was the unanimous opinion of all who knew him that he would do no such thing, that he would continue to expose his men in battle as long as there was a possibility of his being able to treat with the enemy on the basis of his remaining in the country and at the head of the government, but that so soon as he saw there was no hope of that, he would make the best terms he could and get out of the country with as much of the property belonging to himself and the Paraguayan people as he could take with him. We were not mistaken in our estimate of his character ; for although he never did leave the country alive, and fell at last after all his army had been destroyed, yet, as will be seen hereafter, he never exposed himself to danger when he could avoid it, and instead of falling at the head of his legions, he was finally killed while running away and trying to escape. Foreseeing as I did the thousands upon thousands of lives that would be sacrificed before he could be subdued if he adhered to the resolutions which he said he had taken, and believing also that the allies never would treat with him except on the condition that he should leave the country, I thought it my duty to express my opinions to him in regard to the course he was pursuing. I knew I was treading on dangerous ground, and that I must be very guarded in what I said, else I should so enrage him that the situation, not only of myself, but of all the foreigners in the country, would be much worse than it already was. I saw, too, that I must mix with my disapproval a great deal of personal flattery, to make it appear that, even if he were to leave the country, he could do so as a hero, and be held as such throughout the world.

I will therefore resume my journal, and relate in substance what I replied to him : " I said, in reference to this, that I was



very sorry to hear him talk so ; that if worst came to worst, and he saw he must fall, the way he proposed was not the best ; that if the result was to be the triumph of the allies and the conquest of Paraguay, it were better to look the truth in the face and act with reason, rather than attempt the romantic ; that his name was already well known in all parts of the world, and the heroic defence made by the Paraguayan people against the vastly stronger foe had given them the sympathy of the world, and if he were to treat after he found a continuance of the war could only result in the sacrifice of his people, he would be received abroad with welcome and greatly honored wherever he might go ; that it would be better, and more to his fame and credit, to save his life and the lives of thousands of others, rather than uselessly and recklessly throw them away. But no, he said there was no future for him ; he should leave no one in whom he had an interest ; save only the children I saw around him (Madam Lynch's), there was nobody else in the world that he cared anything for. Life was a mere nothing, a thing of a few years more or less. He had not lived very long, but he had lived much ; and it were better to fall at the pinnacle of honor than to live longer a fugitive, his country given up as spoil to the enemy. He spoke of the refusal of Caxias to entertain any proposition of mediation, and said that there was no alternative for him then but to fight it out to the last. I replied to him that I thought the letter of Caxias to me, in which he had said that no proposition of mediation from any source would be listened to for a moment except on condition that Lopez should leave Paraguay, was not respectful to the government that had offered it, and that I should probably answer it to that effect. This conversation lasted about an hour and a half, and, promising to consider all he had said and see him the next morning, I took my leave.

"The next day, at eleven o'clock, A. M., I went to see him again, and found him at breakfast with Don Benigno, Colonel Aguiar, and Pancho. After they had finished breakfast, he sent off the others, and we resumed conversation on the same subject that we had been engaged upon the day before. I



told him I had been thinking of all he had said, and it appeared to me the proposed course would have an effect the reverse of what he supposed on his fame. Other people, historians and literary men generally, on whose judgment the active participants in the great events of the world must depend for their future fame, would never approve the useless sacrifice of life after all was lost, but would rather condemn it, and he would thus lose whatever of fame and glory he had already achieved. He said no ; he was resolved, and the extremities to which he should resort sooner than give up would be chargeable to other nations that had thus left him without support. When he began the war, he had never thought it would come to this ; he had not supposed it would be so long or so desperate ; but he had carried it on in a way that must give him a great name in history, and why other governments showed no interest in him was a wonder, — again giving me the left-handed compliment of having small influence, or else I would have so enlisted my government in his behalf that it would have come to his rescue. I replied that a good cause bravely fought did not the less secure the sympathy and respect of the world, if it finally yielded to greatly superior forces. What men of modern times had been received with the most enthusiasm and respect ? Not the victors with laurels ; not those who had triumphed, irrespective of their cause, by means of superior resources, or even superior genius and ability. Napoleon was none the less honored for having died a prisoner at St. Helena than he would have been had he conquered at Waterloo and afterwards expired in the Tuileries. And of all the heroes of later times who had been hailed with most enthusiasm by the crowds of people that had followed their chariots, those who had been most honored and most eagerly welcomed among the first nations of the world were the great soldiers in the cause of freedom, Kossuth and Garibaldi ; and that he, therefore, though forced to yield and retire, might expect to receive great attention. This flattery seemed greatly to please him, but it could not move him from his resolution. He said he knew his name



was enough, go where he might, to insure him the highest honors, but he had shown from the first that he was not a man to change his mind or his purpose. Especially should the Emperor of Brazil learn that he had mistaken his man when he had provoked the hostility of Francisco Solano Lopez. He had no ambition, never had; he labored for his country, and was determined to survive or fall with it. He dwelt much on his own abnegation, and could not understand why such an example of self-sacrifice had not won to his support the other nations of the earth. But his acts would justify him, and he wanted no other advocate in the future. By his acts he stood, and they should be his monument in future ages. '*Mis hechos, mis hechos.*' Later in the day I went to see him again, and we talked for an hour. He was anxious I should inform Berges officially, that the mediation proffered by the United States had been rejected by the allies, as his army had had their hopes greatly exalted from the knowledge of the fact that the mediation of the United States had been tendered, and had expected that peace might result from my visit to their camp. At the time I had come through on the Shamokin they had been greatly disappointed, as then they had also been led to believe that peace would soon follow the forcing of the blockade. Bidding him adieu, and telling him I still cherished the hope that the war would never be carried to the extremities which he had intimated that it might be, I left Paso Pucu a little after sunset, and went to Humaita, where the Ipora was waiting with her steam up to take me on board and carry me to the capital."



## CHAPTER XIV.

Another Visit to Paso Pucu. — Arrival of Despatches. — Letter from General Asboth. — He is insulted by Admiral Godon. — Note to Caxias. — Patriotic Offerings by the Paraguayans. — Grand National Testimonial to Marshal Lopez. — Public Meetings and Addresses. — Specimen of the Adulation of the Masses. — Discourse of Adelina Lopez. — English Offer of Mediation. — Mr. Gould's Propositions. — Bad Faith of Lopez. — His Reasons for breaking off Negotiations. — French and English Gunboats pass the Blockade. — Folly of the Naval Officers. — They become Tools of Lopez. — Departure of Consul Cochelet. — Lopez's Hatred of him. — He is detained at Humaita, and exposed to the Fire of the Allies.

**B**UT two days had elapsed after my return from the army head-quarters to Asuncion, when I received a telegram advising me that the United States gunboat Wasp had come up as far as Itapiru, and that her commander, W. A. Kirkland, had come through the military lines, and brought despatches for me, and would remain at head-quarters until he might receive any correspondence that I might wish to send away. At the same time I was informed that a steamer would be at my disposal to go down to Humaita on the following day. Accordingly, on the 21st, I again started for the army head-quarters, and arrived there on the morning of the 23d. Among the despatches which I received were the long-delayed instructions in regard to the proposed mediation of the United States, and also a letter from our Minister in Buenos Aires, advising me that while the offer of mediation had not in terms been refused by the allies, it had not been accepted, and that he believed the points of difference between the belligerents were not so irreconcilable but that some means might be discovered by which both parties might be induced to open negotiations for a cessation of the war. He



cherished the idea, which was long afterwards entertained by the ministers of other nations in Buenos Aires, that terms might be offered to Lopez by the allies, such as he would accept. When he learned, therefore, that a gunboat was to be sent for the purpose of taking up my despatches, he notified Admiral Godon, that, in order more fully to carry out the instructions of his government in regard to mediation, he would like a passage up the river on a national vessel. The Admiral told him that, though the gunboat was going, he must stay at home ; and the scarred, war-worn old veteran had the mortification of seeing the gunboat sail away without him, and was therefore obliged to abandon all hope that the mediation would ever be accepted. On the return of Commander Kirkland from the Paraguayan to the allied camp, I took advantage of the opportunity to send a letter to the Marques de Caxias, in reply to the one he had written me at the time I visited his camp, in which he had stated that the allies would never accept the mediation of the United States, or entertain any proposition for peace, until the terms of the Triple Alliance were complied with, and Lopez was driven from power and from the country. To this letter I replied : " The United States, in offering their mediation to bring about a cessation of hostilities between the allied powers and Paraguay, were actuated only by the most laudable desire to be of service to all parties engaged in the war, as well as to conserve in general the interests of peace, in which all the world is concerned ; but your Excellency meets the offer by stipulating a condition precedent even to considering the question of mediation. This condition is, that the President of Paraguay now in authority shall first abdicate his office and leave the country. It certainly never could have been the intention of the government of the United States to offer its mediation on any such presupposed basis. The fundamental principle of that government is, that the people of every nation have a clear and unquestionable right to that form of government which they shall select, and that all just powers emanate from the consent of the governed ; that no foreign power has a right to



impose upon a neighboring and independent country a government not selected by its people ; and as the people of Paraguay have never evinced a desire to change their form of government, or to place at the head of it any other than the present chief magistrate, the government of the United States cannot, consistently with its traditional policy, regard with favor the treaty of alliance by which the three powers bound themselves to impose other authority than the present on the people of Paraguay.

“ But the allied powers, as appears by the note of your Excellency, are resolved to prosecute the war until the present duly elected President of the Republic, Francisco Solano Lopez, may be deposed or driven from the country. This condition precedent to mediation is certainly so antagonistic to all ideas of national self-government that the undersigned believes it to be his duty to his government, that never could have contemplated such a reply to its offer of mediation, to protest against it ; and the undersigned is of the opinion that your Excellency would regard it as extraordinary were the circumstances reversed and the same demand on the part of President Lopez made a condition precedent to mediation, and he should require, as a preliminary condition, that the Emperor of Brazil should abdicate his throne and President Mitre his presidential chair. How such a reply to the offer of a neutral and friendly power would be justly regarded by the government of the United States, or by that of his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Brazil, the undersigned leaves to the consideration of your Excellency. The position thus taken by the allies, that no mediation can be entertained until one of the parties concerned no longer has a political existence, appears to render impossible anything like a peaceful solution of the impending strife, and the war must accordingly go on until one of them, from its chief to its last squad of soldiers, is destroyed, or the other becomes worn out and exhausted. Either of these results the government of the United States would deeply deplore, and in offering its mediation its object was to avert such a catastrophe. But its good



offices being refused, and even denied a hearing, it can only await with deep interest the impending issue."

This reply, I soon afterwards learned, gave great offence, not only to the Marques de Caxias, but to all the allies ; and the manner in which they evinced their displeasure was certainly not dignified, nor worthy of an alliance embracing three nations. They would have it that in forcing their blockade, and in exposing the absurd features of the Triple Alliance, I was acting in the interest of Lopez, and several months afterwards they gratified their spite by laying hold of some provisions I had ordered from Buenos Aires and detaining them for a long time in Corrientes, alleging, as an excuse for such contemptible conduct, that I did not need so much, and, besides, that my boxes contained contraband of war. These provisions were finally brought through by an English gunboat, but after that the allies took every means possible to render my longer stay in Paraguay disagreeable. Despatches, newspapers, and provisions, all alike were detained ; and when at last I got out of Paraguay I found all my mail matter for nearly a year previous stored at Corrientes, and on reaching Buenos Aires I was presented with numerous bills for supplies which I had never received. Thus the allies had their revenge.

When in the camp of the Marques de Caxias, in March, 1867, he appeared so confident of his ability to overrun Paraguay and destroy Lopez and his whole army, that after my return to Asuncion I was greatly surprised that for months and months there was no movement of his army, and that he appeared to be held in check and powerless to do anything. I was convinced he had at least three times the number of troops that Lopez had, and also everything else that money could procure to render his army formidable. Still he made no sign that we could hear of at the capital. The *Semanario* frequently had accounts of skirmishes which were magnified into great victories ; but beyond that we could not hear of anything whatever of a warlike nature transpiring at the front. We could see that Paraguay was becoming exhausted ; that older men and younger boys were being conscripted and sent to the army ; that the



women throughout the country were subjected to harder toil, compelled to labor more in the fields, to plant corn and mandioca, and to contribute more and more of the little that had been left to them of clothing, of their cattle and their horses. The popular demonstrations of gratitude to Lopez seemed each time to have a more forced and ghastly character. In September of that year, after the silversmiths had been working up the gold which had been contributed in such vast quantities to make golden book-covers, sheaths, and caskets, all to be presented to the great Lopez, it was given out that there was to be a grand ceremony in the Palace, at which the presents intended for his Excellency were to be exhibited, and addresses made by the ladies of the country, and also by the Vice-President and the Cabinet Ministers. It was intended that this meeting should be of a semi-official character, and I had the honor of receiving an invitation to be present. On a table in the centre of the room were placed the costly presents. One of them was in the form of an album, with covers of solid gold a quarter of an inch thick and contained a dedicatory address to his Excellency, written in the same adulatory style as everything else of a public nature which was permitted to be delivered in the public meetings, and purporting to be signed by many hundreds of the principal women of Paraguay. At the head of the list was the mother of the President, Doña Juana Carillo de Lopez. The Vice-President, Sanchez, Berges, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, his assistant, Benitez, and several others high in authority, were present; and a vast crowd of women, among whom were at least a dozen of the present and past mistresses of Lopez. The old Vice-President opened the proceedings by reading a very long discourse. This was succeeded by addresses read by the wife of Colonel Fernandez, by Doña Rafaela, the sister of Lopez, and many other ladies of the highest rank at the Paraguayan court. Most of them were unable to read themselves, and their addresses, which had been prepared for them, were read by the Vice-President or some other high official, or by some of their friends who



had been better educated. The address which was bound in the golden volume was read by Benitez. Forty or fifty of the leading women of the country, headed by the mother and sisters of Lopez himself, by three of his mistresses, and the mothers of two others, signed this characteristic effusion. A few paragraphs from this document will serve as a specimen of many of the same class : —

“The exalted merits of your Excellency, and your entire consecration to the interests of your country, are of such a nature, and your grand services for the Republic are of such transcendental importance, that they do not need our eulogies, our good words, or our presents. We recognize, sire, this truth ; but as your Excellency is the hero of the nation, the anchor of salvation for the country, and with it the anchor of our honor, of our rights, and of our interests, and of those of our families, and since your Excellency and the Republic of Paraguay are one and the same thing, as is proved by many eloquent testimonials, and especially by the great deeds of the present war, the daughters of Paraguay cannot fulfil the desires of their hearts unless they be permitted to offer their contingent to the defence of the national cause as a demonstration of their love and gratitude in particular towards the beloved son of their country, and who is to-day its father and savior. Deign, therefore, sire, to accept as a personal tribute the present book, in which is placed the national subscription of Paraguayan female citizens, and their patriotic sentiments, in these solemn moments of the Republic. This humble but sincere homage is but a weak proof of the very particular estimation and gratitude which we cherish towards the most excellent Marshal Lopez ; a tribute certainly unworthy of the inestimable merits of your Excellency, but which, as a moral pledge of the love and indissoluble union of the Paraguayan people with the illustrious paternal government of your Excellency, we hope will be received propitiously by the hero who sustains gloriously the principles and the vital interests of America, along with those which constitute the honor, the rights, the prosperity, the glory and felicity, of the Paraguayan people. It being the especial duty of the commission charged to present this to your Excellency to express with their own voices the national sentiments of the Paraguayan ladies as well as their own eternal thankfulness for the eminent benefits which your Excellency has conferred upon them, and their sincere prayers



for the important health and happiness of your Excellency and that of the invincible armies under your command, and following up the impulse of our hearts respecting the lofty principles which the Republic sustains in the war to the death into which it has been dragged by the Emperor of Brazil and his allies, we cannot recognize, most excellent sire, any other principle, any other banner, than that which our brothers have raised in the fields of battle, inscribed 'Independence or Death'; and the ladies of Paraguay beg of your Excellency that you will deign to give credit to our constant and invariable decision of not reserving even the sacrifice of our lives in support and defence of the country which we so much love. May God our Lord happily preserve your Excellency for many years !

"ASUNCION, CAPITAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY,  
24th of July, 1867."

From many hundreds of speeches which, upon this and other similar occasions, were pronounced by the Paraguayan ladies in the act of offering their jewels, we will select a few paragraphs from a single one, which was pronounced by Adelina Lopez, one of the many illegitimate daughters of the Marshal. It was not, of course, her own production, having been written for her by the Bolivian refugee, Dr. Roca, who has already been mentioned :—

"Mr. Vice-President : There is in history one deed which constitutes one of its most glorious pages. A woman, guided by her virtue and by her religious and humane sentiments, laid aside one day her richest and most valuable jewels, and, trusting in the genius of the man who pointed out to her the pathway towards one of the most precious conquests for humanity, deposited in his hands those precious jewels, in order to realize that great thought. This woman was Isabella the Catholic ; this great genius was the immortal Columbus. The Paraguayan woman, sire, in this period, in these most solemn moments, when in the ocean of the political life of the country the tempest of her desolating war is roaring, has at last met with a Columbus who points out to her the happy shores whither he will bring, in all its glory, the precious ship of our native country ; and the Paraguayan woman, sire, has lifted herself up with the sentiments of the duty which patriotism imposes upon her, with all the



abnegation and enthusiasm with which the national cause inspires her, to say, in the words of Isabella, to him who points out the means for the salvation of the country, 'Take these my jewels, and realize your sacred thought.' "

During the year 1867 the governments of France and England made several feeble efforts to ameliorate the condition of their subjects in Paraguay. In the month of August, an English gunboat came through the blockade, bringing the Secretary of Legation at Buenos Aires, Mr. G. Z. Gould. He remained for several weeks at the Paraguayan head-quarters, as Lopez would not permit him to go to Asuncion. His object was to inquire into the condition of his countrymen, and get permission for those to leave who desired to do so. Lopez pretended that no one wished to go away, and that all were contented where they were. Yet he would not allow him to see any of them except the three or four who were in the camp. From them he learned that all were very anxious to get away, but that it would be dangerous to say so. No one of them dared make any complaint. Even those in the camp with whom he conversed begged him not to tell Lopez that they wished to get away, as they knew he would not permit them to go, and that, as soon as the Secretary was gone, they would be made to suffer for their expressions of discontent. The gunboat was allowed, however, to take away the widows and children of three English mechanics who had died in the Paraguayan service.

While at the camp at Paso Pucu, Mr. Gould was so far imposed upon by the protestations of Lopez that he was anxious for peace, and would accept any honorable terms that might be proposed, that he undertook to initiate negotiations with the allies. Having arranged conditions with Lopez, such as he believed would be acceptable to them, he went back to their camp to submit them to the allied generals. The proposed bases were as follows :—

1st. A secret and previous understanding will assume to the allied powers the acceptance by the government of Paraguay of the proposals they are inclined to make.



2d. The independence and integrity of the Republic will be formally recognized by the allied powers.

3d. All questions relating to territories and limits in dispute before the present war will be reserved for future consideration, or submitted to the arbitration of neutral powers.

4th. The allied forces will retire from the territory of the Republic of Paraguay, and the Paraguayan troops will evacuate the positions held by them in the territory of Brazil, so soon as the conclusion of peace is assured.

5th. No indemnity for the expenses of the war will be demanded.

6th. Prisoners of war will, on one side and the other, be immediately placed at liberty.

7th. The forces of Paraguay will be disbanded, with the exception of the number necessary for the maintenance of order in the interior of the Republic.

8th. His Excellency the Marshal President, at the conclusion of peace, or the preliminaries thereof, will retire to Europe, leaving the government in the hands of his Excellency the Vice-President, who, according to the constitution of the Republic, remains in charge in similar cases.

With these proposals, which Mr. Gould says had been submitted to Lopez and approved by him, the Secretary passed over to the allied camp. The allied generals believed they would be acceptable to their respective governments, and despatched a messenger to them for authority to negotiate on such bases. Mr. Gould returned, without waiting for a definitive reply, to the Paraguayan camp, and on reporting that the terms, as approved by Lopez, had been submitted, he was told by the military secretary, Luis Caminos, who ostensibly conducted the correspondence, that the eighth article had never been assented to by Lopez, and that he had previously repudiated all and every proposition for his withdrawal from the country. Disgusted with such falsehood and duplicity, Mr. Gould withdrew from the country without condescending to answer the letter of Caminos, which was but a tissue of audacious falsehoods.



The *Semanario*, in giving an account of the attempted mediation of Mr. Gould, represented that the eighth article had been added by the allies. This was the only version of it we had in Asuncion while I remained in the country. Colonel Thompson says "that the real reason why Lopez, at this juncture, refused the terms which he had previously accepted was that, while Mr. Gould was in the allied camp offering them, he received news of a revolt in the Argentine Confederation, which he expected would force the allies to make peace with him on any terms."

Lopez, however, had other reasons for refusing any terms that would oblige him to leave the country. He knew that there were scores of men whose families and friends he had treated so atrociously that only by keeping an army between him and them could he hope for a life lease of a single month. Many of the brothers, sons, and husbands of women whom he had persecuted had sent letters to him telling him that wherever or whenever they might meet him they would kill him at sight. Indeed, as he had told me six months before, there was no future for him beyond the limits of Paraguay.

There were several neutral gunboats, French, English, and Italian, that, following in the wake of the Shamokin, which had opened a road for them, passed through the blockade to hold communication with Lopez; and it is a singular fact, ✓ that every naval officer who went through to his encampment came away a friend, apologist, and defender of the tyrant, while all who went in a diplomatic capacity afterwards represented him to their governments as a monster without parallel. Hence it was that, on the return of these gunboats, two reports invariably got into circulation in regard to the condition of affairs in Paraguay. The naval officers usually remained but a short time in the camp, and while they were there Lopez took good care that they should see nothing that he did not wish to be seen. If they were permitted to have interviews with their countrymen, it was only in the presence of others who would report all that passed; and under those circumstances the very men who would gladly have given



anything they had in the world to get away from Paraguay would not dare to express a word of discontent, or hint a wish to return to their native land. In the mean while Lopez and Madam Lynch would treat them with great attention and hospitality, and give them some trifling presents, so that they would go away impressed with the idea that Lopez and the Madam were much abused and slandered people, and on reaching Buenos Aires would report that they saw no signs of want or suffering in Paraguay, and that, among all the foreigners they had seen, not one had expressed a desire to go away. These reports being sent to Europe and the United States by the agents of Lopez at the mouth of the river, the newspapers throughout Christendom would republish them as proof that Lopez was a wise and just ruler, and all the stories of his cruelties but falsehoods invented and circulated by the allies. The naval commanders thus treated by Lopez were either English, Italian, or American; and from their readiness to become his trumpeters and champions, it would seem that they were of such cheap material that a good dinner, a ring or towel of Paraguayan manufacture, or a tercio of yerba, was sufficient to induce them to betray their trust and leave their countrymen to be tortured and executed.

The French Consul, M. Cochelet, was, for a long time, extremely concerned lest he should never be able to leave the country alive. He had repeatedly asked to be recalled by his government, but the man first sent to relieve him had been taken sick, and after a long delay at Buenos Aires was obliged to return to France. Cochelet was extremely obnoxious to Lopez, and there is little or no doubt that his fears would have been realized had the gunboat which came to take him away not arrived till a few months later. At the time of his departure there was no one in the country, so far as could be judged from appearances, that Lopez so longed to arrest, torture, and execute. Both he and his wife often expressed the opinion that Lopez meant that they should not leave the country till the war was over; and events that occurred after they left convinced every one that, had M. Cochelet been in



Paraguay six months later, his consular character would not have saved him, but that he would have shared the fate of Rodriguez, Nin y Reyes, Leite Pereira, and Vasconcellos, all of whom, at the commencement of the war or afterwards, were there in a diplomatic or consular capacity.

On the 9th of October, 1867, they were cheered by the news that a gunboat had arrived at Curupaiti to take them away, having brought another consul to take the place of M. Cochelet. We were then to lose our nearest and most intimate neighbors ; but much as they had done to relieve the sad monotony of our secluded life, we were greatly rejoiced at their good fortune. The signs and premonitions of evil were so dark and ominous that everybody was in danger, and nearly everybody in fear for his life ; and as M. Cochelet, in looking after the interests of his countrymen, had made himself more obnoxious to Lopez than any other man in the country, we feared that the French Consul would be one of the first victims. But he was allowed to depart in peace, and was succeeded by a person by the name of Cuberville, a man who at once became the apologist and flatterer of Lopez and Madam Lynch, and made use of his official character to assist them in securing the spoils which they had stolen from people whom they afterwards murdered.

The French steamer *Decidée*, that had come through the blockade, was required to fall below it again, after landing M. Cuberville, and remain there until the retiring consul should be heard from. On the 15th M. Cochelet and family embarked on a Paraguayan steamer for Humaita, and on arriving there they were assigned some rooms in a house situate in the line of the fortifications, which the Brazilians had been actually bombarding for several days previously. He immediately sent a letter to be forwarded by flag of truce through the lines to the commander of the *Decidée*. No answer was returned for nine days, and all the while the bombardment was going on, and the shot and shell were falling around the house occupied by the family that appeared to be doomed to destruction. So long a time had elapsed since they had been



thus exposed, that they had almost given way to despair. They believed that Lopez had exposed them purposely to destruction, and would keep them there till they were all killed. At last, however, a few hours after the request of the consul to be removed to a less exposed and dangerous place had been refused, their hearts were made glad by the news that the *Decidée* had returned, and they could embark the next day. The next morning some carts were provided for them to go through to the place of embarkation, and during that very day a shell fell and exploded in the centre of the room where they had been imprisoned for nine days. Colonel Alén, who had been in charge of the prisoners, and doubtless knew the motive of Lopez in exposing them in such a place, could not conceal his chagrin that this shell had not fallen a day sooner, and was overheard to so express himself.

M. Cochelet lost no time in reporting to his government that he had left many of his countrymen in prison, and that they, as well as all the other Frenchmen in Paraguay, would all be killed, if prompt measures were not taken for their rescue. But nobody outside of Paraguay would believe that Lopez was so bad as we who had been there knew him to be. The French government therefore did nothing, and the prophecy of M. Cochelet was fulfilled. Every Frenchman in Paraguay, — nearly a hundred in number, — excepting only Cuberville and the Chancellor of the Consulate, M. Libertad, was killed by Lopez.

To escape from the heat of Asuncion, which in the summer-time is excessive, and to get a change of air and a diversion from the weary monotony of the life, I began to look for a *quinta* or country-house not far from the capital, where my family might pass the hottest period of the year. A very comfortable furnished house at Limpio, near by the residence of my friend Don Mauricio Casal, was offered to us, and we were preparing to move out to it, when our intentions became known to the Lopez family, and we were offered a much finer house, with fine large airy chambers, situate on an elevated spot so as to catch the breezes from all directions. This house was



the property of Doña Rafaela, the younger sister of the President, who, after the war had commenced, was married to Saturnino Bedoya. I suspected that there was an object in this other than personal regard, and that in anticipation of the capture of the capital and surrounding country by the allies, they were looking for a place of refuge and security for such an emergency. But whatever the motive may have been, the old Lady President and Doña Rafaela treated us with great kindness; and we should have been but too happy to have saved them from the allies, had the anticipated sacking taken place, or from the unnatural cruelties of the son and brother, whom even then they feared a thousand times more than the whole allied army. Doña Rafaela had done us a great favor in offering us the use of her *quinta*, and the acquaintance we formed with her served to confirm the favorable opinion we had heard expressed of her by several Paraguayans. They had told us that she did not seem to be one of the Lopez family; that she was charitable and amiable, and with a free hand and a kind word for the needy and suffering, and had none of that grasping avarice which characterized all the rest of the family. An account of the terrible suffering and tortures she experienced at the hands of her brother will be given hereafter. But she lived to rejoice at his death, and to denounce him as a monster.



## CHAPTER XV.

The Mother and Sisters of Lopez. — Their Fears. — Conversations with Prominent Paraguayans. — Their Reserve. — Venancio Lopez. — The *Semanario*. — Benigno Lopez. — His Character and Opinions. — The Quinta de Trinidad. — Passage of Humaita. — James Manlove. — His Capture by the Paraguayans. — His Treatment by Lopez. — His Character and Antecedents. — What the Birds told Berges. — The Beginning of the End. — Our Hopes of Deliverance. — Asuncion evacuated. — Property deposited in the American Legation. — A Meeting of the Consuls. — They resolve to leave.

SIX months had passed since the passage of Curupaiti, and during all that time not a ray of hope had penetrated the gloom that enshrouded the unfortunate residents of the capital. For four months we had not received a word or line of what was transpiring in the world beyond. There was no imaginable reason for this delay, and our only hope was in this, that it could not always last. During nearly all this time I had been living in the house of Doña Rafaela, the sister of the President. Often and often, as I have sat on the upper balcony of the house, with my eyes cast towards the city that lay in death-like silence before me, have I reflected that among the whole twelve or fifteen thousand persons within its limits there was not one who was not unspeakably anxious and wretched, not one who dared speak but with bated breath, and who did not regard the little liberty still left as held by a most precarious tenure, liable to be followed at any hour by dungeons and fetters. I would frequently go into town, as I still kept my house there, in which my private secretary and Mr. Masterman continued to reside. A few of the better class of citizens, the most of them in some way in the government employ, still remained in town. Among these was Don Vicente Urdapilleta, the Chief-Justice, the same



who, in his youth, had suffered twelve years' imprisonment under Francia. With these persons, if I chanced to meet them, I would usually have a few words of the most casual and unimportant character, such as to ask for the news, to speak of the weather, and, with the merest exchange of civilities, go my way. They never had anything to tell, and though always courteous and looking as though they would like to talk with me, I could see that they feared to do so; and as I knew that any conversation I might hold with them they would be obliged, for their own safety, to report to the government, I felt I was doing them a favor by limiting my remarks to the most commonplace affairs, and was always as brief with them as courtesy would permit. They had never anything to communicate; for if they knew anything they did not dare speak of it until it had been announced in the *Semanario*. I usually, however, when I went to town, called on the Minister for Foreign Relations, Don José Berges, and once or twice on Lopez's brother Venancio. The former would always endeavor to draw me out and get my opinion of the situation, but without giving me any information in return. I suspected that, directly on my leaving, he made notes of all I had said, and sent them to the President at his head-quarters. This suspicion I afterwards learned was correct. Those notes, as will be seen hereafter, received a strange explanation from the Minister, and a construction was put upon them such as he little suspected when he jotted them down. But Don Venancio never knew anything, at least never would speak of anything, that had not been licensed by its publication in the *Semanario*. Sometimes rumors would get out of defeat and disaster before the desired version could be announced in the official organ; though unless they were of such magnitude that it was impossible to prevent them from being known, they were never alluded to. But neither Berges nor Venancio could ever give me a word of information on such matters. The little information I did get generally came from the English engineers of the steamers that ran up and down between the army head-quarters and Asuncion.



But they could only tell what they knew at the peril of their lives, and with a certainty that a dungeon and fetters awaited them the moment it should be suspected that they had told me anything which the government desired should be kept secret. When, therefore, I would ask BerGES in regard to the truth of the reports I had heard, he would sometimes ask me how I had heard them. I would reply that "the birds had told me." It was doubtless imprudent and unwise to hold such conversations, knowing as I did that they would be reported to Lopez. As he did not know how I had got my information, and was unable to force me to tell as he could everybody else, he may have begun to suspect that there were some secret channels of communication between me and the army, and perhaps with the outer world. But it all came through the English engineers, who generally would be able to communicate with me or with one of their own countrymen every time they came up to the capital.

Venancio, however, would never talk of anything except his health and my health and that of my family, the weather, or some such matter that could not be construed to mean anything. He appeared to be in a chronic fright. Did I speak of any event that had been mentioned in the paper, he would say, "Yes, so says the *Semanario*." But if I asked of any matter not yet officially promulgated, his answer was always the same, "*No sé nada*" (I know nothing). What the reason of this great trepidation of Venancio was, I could not surmise. I suspected he had done something that had given offence to his brother. He was in a miserable state of health, that had been caused by his early excesses. His physician, an Italian by the name of Domingo Parodi, often spoke to me of his unhappy patient. He was obliged to visit him every day, but if he asked him about anything of a public character, it was always "*No sé nada*," or "*Así dice el Semanario*" (So the *Semanario* says). The man was in one sense a prisoner, as all his own countrymen were as afraid to visit him as he was to talk to them. Nevertheless, he nominally held a high official position, being commandant of arms, and having duties



to perform that required him to visit the arsenal, barracks, and fort at Asuncion every day that his health would permit. What had he done that he appeared even more frightened and depressed than others who were afterwards accused of being his fellow-conspirators? Probably nothing; but he knew better than they did the terrible character of his brother, who, he was even then aware, had ceased to respect his mother's gray hairs, and regarded all ties of consanguinity as matters of indifference.

The other brother of Lopez, who was the youngest of the family, had visited me once or twice when I was residing at his sister's *quinta*. He was a man of much more capacity than Venancio, and was much more communicative with me. The general tone of his conversation was despondent, and he seemed to be impressed with the conviction that Francisco would sooner or later make an end of him. Like many others, he said to me that if he could get out of Paraguay alive, he would willingly sacrifice all his property. He was sharp, shrewd, and avaricious, and was the favorite child of his mother. The Paraguayans disliked him exceedingly. In his greed for wealth, he had, in the time of his father, imposed on the common people without mercy. He would take their cattle at his own price, and they dared not complain or appeal to the government, for they all knew that his own father was the government. He was fond of gambling, but it was dangerous to win from him. Before the war many of the merchants and others having any money used to meet at the Club almost every night, and pass the evening in play. To them the appearance of Benigno was always unwelcome. They did not dare to refuse to play with him or to win his money. In either case they feared they would incur his ill-will; and knowing him to be vindictive as well as avaricious, they feared he would try to injure their business, either by prejudicing his father or brother against them, or by intimidating subordinate government officials, and inducing them to embarrass their mercantile operations. His father always allowed him extraordinary privileges in collecting and shipping



away the yerba maté, tobacco, and other products of the country without paying the duties to which others were subjected. To him, as well as to the other children of Carlos Antonio, several of the finest and largest estancias in the state had in some way fallen during his father's reign, so that at the time of the old man's death he was, for that country, enormously rich. He was, however, universally detested, and I have often heard the remark made that he was worse than his brother.



BENIGNO LOPEZ. (Executed by his brother, Dec. 27, 1868.)

One day, while we were living at the *quinta*, he called to see me, and informed me that he had received orders to proceed to head-quarters. He had previously, while we were in town, intimated to me that he might wish to leave in my care certain valuables — diamonds and jewelry, as I supposed — belonging to himself and his sister, Doña Rafaela ; but he must do so in a very clandestine manner, so that none of the



spies, who were thick as the street-corners, should suspect what he was doing, and report him to his Excellency the President. It was suggested that he could send me a box of cigars, and if within the larger box were another containing the treasures, the bearer would know nothing of it. But neither the cigars nor jewels were ever sent ; and when he came to see me at the *quinta*, he told me that if the time should come when it might seem safer to leave them with me, they would be sent to me by his sister, Doña Rafaela. They never came, however. Before the threatened calamity from an invasion of the allies came upon them, a greater calamity had engulfed them all.

Our life at the *quinta* was very quiet and monotonous, though the mother and sister of Lopez did all they could to render it pleasant. When we first went to live there, they lived very near to us, in the old family mansion, near the church of La Trinidad. But they soon moved to the *quinta* of Saturnino Bedoya, the husband of Rafaela, about a league distant, on the border of what is called Campo Grande, and about five miles distant from the old homestead. The few people who came to visit us were foreigners, and they came but rarely ; and as soon as the hottest season was over, we resolved to return to town. Before leaving, I went out to see the old lady and Doña Rafaela, to thank them for the use of the *quinta*, and for their many acts of kindness. I found that Don Benigno had not yet gone below, but was still with them. He spoke to me quite freely of the suspicion that his brother had in regard to him, and professed to be ignorant of the cause. I told him that he had been imprudent in talking to the French Consul, M. Cuberville, who was at best a fool, and not always sober ; that he had told me of a conversation they had held together, in which he had asked Benigno who was the most suitable man to put at the head of the government in case Francisco Solano should not be able to maintain himself, and that Benigno had suggested the name of his brother-in-law, Bedoya, as the most eligible and proper person. I told him that if Cuberville had said so to me, he had probably said the same to others, and probably to Madam



Lynch. Benigno denied that he had ever said anything of the kind; that Cuberville himself had suggested something of the sort, but that for himself he had not indulged in any such calculations.

In any country but Paraguay, it would not be considered a very grave crime to speculate on what might occur in certain possible contingencies. But there it was considered high treason to entertain a thought that Lopez might be overthrown. He had announced himself in his *Semanario* as in partnership with the Almighty, and often declared to his soldiers that he had achieved such prodigies of valor and prowess only because God had inspired his mind and guided his arm. He was ever boasting that he was fighting the battles of the Lord, and the Lord was backing him up, so that his final triumph was inevitable. Therefore it was treason and heresy united to suggest or think it possible that he should not overcome all his enemies; and when it came to his ears that his brother Benigno had entertained such a thought, he had committed the unpardonable sin, his doom was sealed.

It was apparently a most fortunate thing for me that I returned to town, and resumed my residence in the Legation at the time I did. Had I not done so for two weeks later, it is most likely I should never have left Paraguay alive. I returned on the 12th of February, 1868, and on the 21st the news came that the ironclads had passed Humaita, and the order was given for the evacuation of the town.

On reaching my house in the capital, I was told by my secretary, Mr. Meincke, that the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Berges, was desirous of seeing me. I went to visit him at his *quinta*, a short distance from the capital. He wished to see me in regard to the application of an American by the name of James Manlove for permission to leave town and go into the interior, in order that he might do something to earn his living. He, as well as nearly every other American in Paraguay, had been almost entirely dependent on me for his support since my return to Paraguay in November, 1866.

This Manlove was a native of Maryland, and had been in



the Rebel army all through the war, and at its close had the rank of major. He was a man of herculean strength, six feet four in height, and had seen much service in the war, having many scars to show that he seen hard fighting. I first met him in Rio de Janeiro on my way out in 1865, and afterwards at Buenos Aires. At first he told me he was travelling for amusement merely, that he desired to make a brief visit to Paraguay, thence to cross over to Chili, and return to the United States by way of the Pacific. As he supposed that I would soon be going to Paraguay on a gunboat, he begged me to take him along with me. I told him I could do nothing in the matter, but that he must get the permission of the Admiral if he wished to go up in a national vessel. But he seemed to think that if I would request a passage for him it would be granted, while it would probably be refused if requested only by himself. He therefore thought to enlist me in his interest by telling me what his real object was in going to Paraguay. He said he had seen several of the owners of blockade-runners, and had letters from some of them, particularly one from John Frazer of Charleston, South Carolina, indorsing his character, though for prudential reasons not stating anything of the business in contemplation. His plan was to pass through to Paraguay, in order to get blank commissions from President Lopez duly executed and signed, and with them return to the United States, and start out several unemployed blockade-runners to prey on Brazilian transports and merchant vessels. He alleged that England had furnished them a beautiful precedent, and that as none of the nations of the world had treated the Alabama, Florida, and Shenandoah as pirates, they could not treat their vessels as such, if they only had regular commissions from the government of Paraguay. They would follow the example of the Alabama in all respects, having Paraguayans nominally as commanders, while the crews would be such adventurers as they could pick up.

When I learned that such were his plans, I told him that he should not have told me about them, as then I should be obliged to object to his going on a United States vessel



with me, even though the Admiral might not. But as he had told me his plans in confidence I could not expose him. I could only take good care that he did not impose on any officer or representative of the United States. I advised him that he was going on a bootless errand, that Lopez was so suspicious and distrustful that he would not adopt his plans, and that if he ever got into the country he would find it very difficult to get out of it. He said he was not afraid of that, for if he could only get there and get his commissions he would find his way back to the United States, even if he had to cross over to the Pacific coast. I did not wish him to go, partly for his own sake, but more for my own. If Lopez should listen to his proposals, it would place me in a very embarrassing position, and it would have been my duty to do all I could to thwart the plans of them both. I must then advise our government that a project was on foot for pirates of the Alabama class to leave our ports for the purpose of preying on Brazilian commerce. I knew also, that if, in spite of my efforts to prevent it, one such vessel should once get on the high seas, I should be charged, among the allies at least, with all the damage that she might do them.

Finding that he could get no assistance from me towards passing through the military lines, he started up river for the army, then encamped near Corrientes. I saw him afterwards several times at that place, and he told me he was in the Argentine camp, where he had been treated with great kindness, especially by President Mitre. He did not enlist in any capacity as an officer or soldier, though he messed with Colonel Mansilla and other officers of a high grade. His position was anomalous, as he professed a desire to serve the allies, while he would accept no commission. He had extraordinary skill as a marksman, which he showed to his hosts, and asked for a company of sharpshooters to skirt along in front of the lines and pick off Paraguayans. His request was not granted, however, and he amused himself by frequently going beyond the confines of the camp to shoot ducks. One day he failed to return, and some time after a note from him



was found attached to a bush in which he said he had been taken prisoner. No one doubted that he had sought to be captured ; and as, a few days before, he had been at Corrientes, it was published in all the papers at Buenos Aires that he had gone through at my instigation and as my agent. The allies even before that would have it that I was a friend and in the interest of Lopez, or else I should not have been so eager to get to my post.

On reaching Asuncion, some months afterwards, I found him there. He said that the night after he left the camp of President Mitre he worked his way towards the Paraguayan lines, and hid himself in the grass till daylight came, and when he saw some pickets coming in that direction he hailed them, and they came forward and took him prisoner. He was taken immediately, blindfold, to Lopez's head-quarters, and kept a close prisoner. He was questioned as to who and what he was, and what were his motives in making his way to Paraguay at such risk of his life. He stated what his plans were, as he had told them to me in Buenos Aires. His papers were taken and examined, and as there was nothing among them to show that he was supported by any responsible parties, Lopez, as usual, jumped to the conclusion that he was a spy or assassin, and his first impulse was to shoot him. He sent different persons to question him, among them his favorite inquisitor, Luis Caminos. He was very anxious to learn something about me, and why I delayed so long down the river. He told them all he knew about me, and said that I knew what his object was in coming to Paraguay. Why then had I not written ? He replied that as a minister of a nation on friendly terms with all the belligerents, I could not, and would not, take any part in his schemes. But why did I not come through ? Why was I delaying so on the other side ? He said I could not get through, that the allies would not permit me to pass their lines, and the American admiral was acting in conjunction with them to prevent my coming. Caminos then told him he was lying, that he was a spy, that he knew very well the reason why I did not go through to



Paraguay was because I had been bribed by the Brazilians to linger on the way ; they knew all about it, and if he wished to save himself he had better confess. They knew I was the enemy of Paraguay, and if he did not tell all he knew they should publish in the *Semanario* that he had come as my agent to propose an infamous scheme of piracy, which his magnanimous Excellency had scorned to entertain, and which publication would ruin me both at home and abroad. At this Manlove, who was of a most violent and ungovernable temper, got into a great rage, and said that any such statements would be infamous falsehoods, that in everything I had acted honorably towards him, towards Paraguay, and towards the allies. This conversation being carried on through an interpreter, Manlove asked the latter to tell Caminos to leave him and not come again, and to say to the President that if he wanted to question him any further to send gentlemen to talk with him, instead of such fellows as Caminos. The inquisitors left him, and he had little doubt that he would be led out to execution the next morning. The President, on this occasion, took counsel with his staff. His bishop, Palacios, who always recommended and approved the most sanguinary measures, insisted that he should be shot. So did Colonel Wisner and General Barrios. Dr. Stewart, however, professed faith in Manlove's statement, and urged that his refusal to say anything against me, even though he might be executed for it, was a proof that he was a man of veracity and honor. Besides, Stewart said, that if Manlove's story was true, and I could not pass the lines through the fault of an incompetent or corrupt admiral, the government of the United States would soon overrule the admiral, and I should ere long arrive in Paraguay. Madam Lynch inclined to the same opinion as Dr. Stewart ; and as Lopez still hoped much from the intervention of the United States, he hesitated, and Manlove, unfortunately for himself, was not then executed. He remained a prisoner, however, for several weeks at Paso Pucu, until his health began to fail, when he was allowed to go to Asuncion, and a small sum of money was given him to pay his expenses.



He was there on my arrival in November, 1866. His plans had miscarried, as I had forewarned him they would, and he could not get away, nor had he any means of supporting himself. He had been a rebel through our war, and had quarrelled with his kindred by taking the part he did. Being a Marylander, he could not allege the miserable pretence of State sovereignty and State rights as a justification for being a rebel. He had been attached to General Forrest's command, and participated in the Fort Pillow massacre (though he always denied that there was any massacre or any violation of the rules and customs of war), and had been in many desperate raids. Altogether he was, from his antecedents, one of the last men who could claim sympathy or aid from a minister of the United States. But he was an American, helpless and in want, and I supplied him with all his necessities required so long as I was permitted to do so. His violent, ungovernable temper, the worst, I think, I ever saw in any man, — a weakness which he often spoke of and lamented, — led him to quarrel with nearly every foreigner that he had any intimacy with in the country. But he was a man generally of courteous manners and of fair education, and of extensive reading and information. His defects of temper I would pass unnoticed but for his tragic end, since he might, perhaps, except for that fact, have escaped, as did Bliss and Masterman.

During his forced detention in Asuncion he made repeated efforts to engage in some business by which he could support himself, and with that view he had asked permission to go into the interior to cultivate a *chacra*. I had represented his case to Berges as one of great hardship, and said that as he had come to Paraguay to do a great service to the cause of President Lopez, he ought at least not to suffer from want or be dependent on me for his support. Berges promised to consult Lopez in regard to him, and on my return to town I found, on visiting him, that it was on his account he desired to see me. He said that, under the circumstances, the President did not deem it prudent that any of the foreigners then in the



capital should remove into the interior, but that his Excellency had advised him to furnish Major Manlove with three hundred dollars Paraguayan currency, equivalent then to about seventy-five dollars in coin, to supply his immediate necessities. A day or two after Manlove himself went to see the Minister, and the money, three hundred dollars, was given to him, and on the 19th I went myself to see Berges, as I had heard a rumor of another grand triumph of Paraguayan arms, and desired to question him about it. I did not expect to learn any news, as he never told me any unless the *Semanario* was about coming out, and he knew what it was to contain. In that case I could sometimes learn from him a few hours earlier than other people if anything of importance had occurred. On this occasion he said, in reply to my usual inquiry for the news from the army, that he knew nothing, though he suspected something important was to take place soon; and on my asking what his reasons were for so believing, he replied by using the expression I had often used to him, that "the birds had told him."

On the 18th, our friends from the country, the Casals, whom we had so often visited, came in from Limpio. One of the sisters, Anita, had been with us for some three months before, and the pretty Conchita came in with her married sister and niece to visit her. There was nothing about town to indicate that anything unusual had happened at headquarters, and on the afternoon of the 21st I went with Manlove to shoot ducks in the *lagunas*, situate about a league from town and near the *quinta* of the Lady President. We were returning just at dusk when we were met on the way by the engineers Burrell and Valpy, who told us in great confidence that the crisis was at hand, the Brazilian squadron had passed Humaita and was on its way to Asuncion. They were in great glee over the news, as they believed their long imprisonment and forced service would soon be over. I confess I shared their pleasure. If the fleet had passed Humaita, then it seemed that Lopez and his whole army were surrounded and besieged so effectually they could never escape. The



war must soon be over. Lopez was in a trap. For a long time his only means of communicating with the capital or of receiving supplies had been by the river, and the ironclads and monitors could easily cut that off. We all then entered the town, more joyous than we had been for many months, supposing that the startling news was not yet known to the public. But on reaching my house I found that everybody knew it, and that already the evacuation of the town had been ordered. People were rushing to my house in great numbers, asking me what they should do, and what I would do. I found, too, that Berges had sent me a message, requesting me to visit him at the Government House as soon as possible. I went accordingly, and he told me that four ironclads had passed Humaita, and two of them were already as high up the river as Villa Franca on the way to Asuncion; that the town was to be evacuated, declared a military point, and the capital removed to Luque; and he had sent for me to offer me any assistance in obtaining a suitable and convenient place of residence in some place beyond the city limits. I at once told him that there was no occasion for his taking that trouble, as I should not leave Asuncion. I told him that the United States Legation was for the time United States territory; that the government of Paraguay had no power or authority over me; and that if there were danger that the town might be taken by the Brazilians, that was a reason why I should remain in it. He said that it would be very dangerous to remain in town, as it would very likely be bombarded, and besides, if the people all left, it would be difficult to get the supply of food necessary for my family. My reply to this was, I should trust to my flag for protection, and if any one ventured to violate it he would find it an expensive pastime; and as for the difficulty in obtaining supplies, I would take that into consideration when it might occur. I told him also that I questioned the right of the government to compel foreigners to leave the town; for if it were taken by the enemy, their property would very likely be seized by them and appropriated; while, if they were allowed to remain and guard it,



it would undoubtedly, as it belonged to foreigners, be respected.

He insisted, however, that the right of the government to drive them into the interior was perfect; and I saw it was useless to argue the question, for, whether it was or not, the order would be put in force.

On returning to my house I found a multitude of people, foreigners and natives, all eager to know what I intended to do. I told them promptly that I should stay. Many then besought me to permit them to move into the vacant rooms of my house; but I told them that I could not do that, for my premises, though large, were not large enough to take in all who might desire to come, and besides, it would give offence to the government and render it worse for themselves. They then asked if they could be permitted to bring their trunks and most valuable effects and leave them in my care. To this I assented, and told them if they considered my house safer than their own, they were welcome to whatever security it would give, but that, as it was impossible to take any account of what they might bring at such a moment, and my own house might also not be respected, all they left in it would be at their own risk. They must, however, have them all duly marked and labelled, so that I might know to whom they belonged.

The people began to bring in their valuables the same night and pile them into my spare rooms. All was confusion and alarm. The long-threatened evil had now come. The people must flee to the mountains, for the government had so ordered. They could take little away with them, and what they might take they would be exposed to lose. For people so poor, the Paraguayans had a great deal of fine jewelry, which they regarded with a sort of idolatrous devotion. A part of this they had been forced to give up *voluntarily*, and now they were liable to lose the remainder. The poorer class, generally, took their gold beads and rings and chains with them, but those having considerable amounts of money or jewels could not be encumbered with it in their flight, and, as their only hope, came with it to the United States Legation.



Late in the evening the three consuls — the Italian, French, and Portuguese — came to my house to advise with me about the situation. The only full consul was the Italian, Lorenzo Chapperon. He had been in the country but a short time, and hardly knew what to make of the strange situation in which he found himself. The Frenchman, Cuberville, had been there longer, but was only acting consul, having been sent up by the Minister at Buenos Aires to relieve the former consul, M. Laurent Cochelet. I told them that I should remain in the city, and that, in my opinion, they ought to do the same, and look after the interests and property of their countrymen; that their presence was more needed in the capital than ever before, and it was their and my duty to remain. Leite Pereira, the Portuguese, was of my opinion; but Cuberville, who seemed to have become a mere creature of Lopez, said we ought to go with the government and had no right to disobey its orders. Besides, he said it would be very dangerous to remain. The Brazilians might bombard the place, and we were not bound to incur any such danger. His poltroonery disgusted me more than did his subserviency to Lopez, and I told him that for us to abandon our post at that time, when our presence was most needed, would be disgraceful, and that the Brazilians might come and shoot down my flag and knock down my house, but I should not leave my post. The Italian said little, though he was inclined to follow the Frenchman, while Leite Pereira was disposed to remain in the city. This conference broke up about midnight, yet, though no one but the three consuls and myself were present, the government was informed of what had transpired in it before morning, for Leite Pereira was notified, at seven o'clock the next morning, to leave the town immediately. Cuberville had acted the spy and informer, and when remonstrated with the next day by some of his countrymen for not remaining at his post to protect the property they could not protect for themselves, he replied that his skin was of more importance to him than all the French interests in Paraguay.



## CHAPTER XVI.

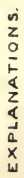
The City of Asuncion. — Its Appearance and Characteristics. — Scenes in the Market-Place. — The Government at the Time of the Evacuation. — Vice-President Sanchez. — Anecdotes of his Career. — Minister Berges. — His Visit to the United States. — His Shrewdness. — Venancio Lopez. — Colonel Francisco Fernandez. — Major Gomez. — Benigno Lopez. — Extracts from Diary. — A Council held at Asuncion. — Deliberations on the Situation. — It is resolved to resist the Ironclads. — Consequences of this Council. — Its Members incur Suspicion and Persecution. — Their Fate.

THE city of Asuncion, at the beginning of the war, was supposed to contain from eighteen to twenty thousand inhabitants. Du Graty, a Belgian adventurer, who was employed by the elder Lopez to write a work in praise of the ruling family, and to prove that, while Paraguay was the finest country in the world, Lopez was the wisest and best ruler, gives the number in Asuncion and the immediate suburbs of Trinidad, Recoleta, and Lambaré at forty-eight thousand. This estimate exceeds the true number by at least one half, and the estimate of the same author in regard to the population of the whole state is greatly at variance with the truth. The entire population in 1857, as given by him, was 1,337,439. But Du Graty was never in Paraguay for more than two months, and in that time saw very little of the country. While there, Carlos Antonio Lopez made a contract with him to furnish the materials for a book, while Du Graty should furnish praise. The figures were all furnished by Lopez, and the principal object of the work was to convince the world that Paraguay was much richer, stronger, and more populous than was really the case. There is no reliance whatever, therefore, to be placed in Du Graty's figures, as neither Carlos nor Francisco Lopez had any regard for truth. No census of the country ever was taken, and all estimates of the population are









- † CAPILLA, OR VILLAGE  
Cº CERRO, OR MOUNT  
ARº ARROYO, OR STREAM



mere guesswork. If the government had any reliable statistics of the population, they were never given to the public, and every intelligent person in the country knew that Du Graty's figures were greatly exaggerated. It will probably never be known within one hundred thousand of the exact number, how many people were in the country at the commencement of the late war. But from the best calculation I have been able to make from the few statistics I could get, I conclude that at the death of Carlos Antonio Lopez the entire population of the state was about eight hundred thousand, ✓ and that Asuncion proper contained less than eighteen thousand souls.

The city as approached from above by the river had a very fine appearance. The Paraguay here forms a bend, and from the inner curve the land rises gently and irregularly, yet so that, for several miles up the river, nearly the whole town could be taken in at a glance. The government buildings and those which belonged to the Lopez family are distinctly in sight; and as in the *patios* of the better class of houses and among the hovels of the poor there were a great number of orange-trees, the general aspect of the city as seen at a distance was most agreeable.

When within the city, however, the appearance was very different. The streets were generally in bad condition, unpaved, and irregular. The sidewalks throughout the whole city, if joined in a line, would not exceed a mile in length; and the houses of the poorer classes, that, shaded by orange-trees, had such a quiet arcadian appearance at a distance, were found to be miserable hovels, with every appearance of discomfort.

The principal plaza, or market-place, of Asuncion was situ- ✓  
ate in the central part of the city, and of a bright, clear morning had a most interesting aspect. The meat-market, which was usually a monopoly of some member of the Lopez family, was in a large adobe building fronting this plaza; but everything else in the way of eatables was offered for sale in the open market. Carts from the country would come in at



night loaded with maize, oranges, melons, wood, and molasses, and in the morning would be ranged along on one side, and their cargoes exposed for sale. Scores of women would also come in at night driving donkeys with panniers filled with chipa, chickens, eggs, mandioca, and everything else they had to sell, and which might find a sale in the capital. The donkeys would be turned loose, and each woman would take her place in the open plaza to dispose of her stock. These women were generally ambitious to have a smart and cleanly appearance. Their soiled dresses, in which they might have walked twenty miles the night before to bring their scanty wares to market, would be exchanged for others that were white and clean. The number thus engaged every morning was usually from four to five hundred, and from sunrise till eight or nine o'clock the scene was one of the most unique and lively that can be imagined.

The government at Asuncion, previous to the passage of the ironclads and the interruption of communication, maintained the formality of a Cabinet, though no member of it ever presumed to do the least thing without the order of the President. The telegraph was always busy, and all events, from the lukewarmness of a Cabinet officer to the jest of a peon or slave, were instantly reported at head-quarters. The Vice-President, Sanchez, was nominally the President of the council when Lopez was absent. But he dared suggest nothing unless ordered by his chief, and an order from him was never to be discussed. Hence the Cabinet Ministers were only so many clerks, receiving their instructions direct from Lopez, to whose clerical duties was superadded that of being spies on each other.

Sanchez was at this time a feeble and decrepit old man of about eighty-two years of age. He had been the writing-man of the government for many years. He had a good share of Jesuitical craft, and an easy style, not wanting in dignity. He had first been in the service of Francia, and the elder Lopez made use of him to express, in language which he himself was not sufficiently educated to command, the ideas he wished to





THE PLAZA OR MARKET-PLACE OF ASUNCION.







promulgate in his state papers. The younger made him Vice-President, as he was without ambition and was too old to be a rival. He never had anything to suggest of his own volition, and hence never provoked the jealousy of either of the despots he served. The elder Lopez invariably treated him with the greatest rudeness and contempt, which he bore with the utmost humility. Official letters addressed to him he was not to open, and if handed to him by any person like a minister or consul, he would lay it aside till his departure. But if the bearer commenced discussing the subject-matter of the letter, the old man was sure to have mislaid his spectacles, but would promise to look for them immediately, and give the subject his earliest attention. As Minister for Foreign Relations, he was addressed officially by ministers from abroad as "Your Excellency," and as this was also the title by which the President was addressed, it gave great offence to the first President, who abused him because he was so called by those whom he could not control. On one occasion when an English Minister was there, Sanchez ventured very meekly to request him to address him in his official letters by some lower title than that of Excellency. The Englishman, however, told him that such was the custom and etiquette of foreign nations, and he must conform to it. Sanchez then begged him to speak to the President on the matter, and take the blame to himself. The Englishman did so, and showed the old savage that it would be disrespectful to himself to address his minister by any lower title than his Excellency.

"O well, then," testily replied the old man, "call him his Excellency, if you like ; he is only a beast."

José Berges, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, of whom so much has already been said, was about sixty years of age at this time (1868). He was a man of good judgment and much astuteness, and had been selected by Carlos Antonio Lopez as his commissioner to the United States in 1856. In that capacity he had managed his case with such dexterity and success, that on his return he was retired, much to his own



satisfaction, from all public service. As a public man who had rendered an important service to the country, his presence was obnoxious to his master, and he considered himself fortunate, on his return, that he was not rewarded with imprisonment and fetters. By the time that Francisco Solano succeeded to power, however, the American question no longer engrossed public attention, and Berges's services had been forgotten, and he was then appointed minister *de los Relaciones Exteriores*. It was an honor he did not covet, but he dared not refuse it. Lopez knew he was far better qualified for the position than any other of his subjects that he could trust, and Berges was compelled to accept a position that required of him services at which his soul revolted. He knew he must be both the slave and the spy of an imperious, selfish, and brutal master, but he also knew that there was but one step from refusal to imprisonment. His position was most trying. He was compelled to treat with the representatives of foreign nations in personal interviews in which questions would arise that he could not even discuss without danger of incurring the anger of his master, and hence the reputation he acquired among them all was that he was deceitful and Jesuitical. The French Consul, M. Laurent Cochelet, ever vigilant and watchful over the interests of his countrymen, often complained of his duplicity and evasiveness, and the half-promises that he did not respect. He could not believe at that time that the Minister could converse with him only with a halter around his neck. But the sad fate that afterwards overtook him convinced the consul that he had misunderstood the character both of the unhappy minister and his terrible master.

Gumesindo Benitez, who held the position of assistant to Berges, was also the principal writer in the *Semanario*, and besides it was his business to get up patriotic speeches for the women to deliver at their spontaneous assemblies, when they offered their jewels and their lives in devotion to his Excellency, and so expert had he become in the work of adulation, he seemed to have been convinced by his own words that



Lopez was a being of a superior order. He was one of the very few who in praising Lopez seemed to believe what he said. His faith and fidelity, however, availed him no more at the last than did the hypocrisy and submission of the others. All alike were to die as traitors or conspirators.

Venancio Lopez had been Minister of War and Marine at the beginning of the war. He was some five years younger than Francisco, and, though the least intelligent, was the best liked of the three brothers. Like them he was coarse and sensual, but he was not so grasping and avaricious, and did not aspire to the honors or dangers of the government. He would have preferred a life of ease and license on one of the estancias obtained for him by his father at the expense of others. His father, however, forced him into the military service, and compelled him to reside in the capital. Soon after the accession of his brother to power he fell into disgrace, and for a while was a prisoner in his own house. What his offence was I never could learn, and it is doubtful if he himself knew any better than I did. Probably he had ventured to act on his own responsibility in some trivial matter, and his punishment was meant to remind him that he could presume on no indulgence, as in his father's lifetime, by reason of his kinship with the President, and that he, like all others, held everything, even life, at the will of his brother. After the commencement of the war he was kept at head-quarters for a long time, doing no duty, though holding the rank of colonel. Owing to his shattered health, he had been allowed to return to Asuncion several months before the ironclads passed Humaita, and at that time held the office of *comandante de las armas*.

The active commandant at the time, on whom appeared to devolve all the responsibility for enforcing the orders of Lopez, was Colonel Francisco Fernandez, of whose character and relations with Lopez as his confidential agent and business manager of his affairs a brief notice has been already given. He had acquired, partly by inheritance and partly through the favor of his master, a considerable property. He



alone, of all whom Lopez pretended to admit to his councils, was a married man. His wife was a beautiful woman of nearly pure Spanish blood, and on such intimate terms with the sisters of Lopez that she was permitted to vie with them and with the imported Jezebel in richness of attire and in wealth of jewels. By all the subordinates and government employees, Fernandez was much better liked than any one else who had the ear of Lopez; for he would listen to their complaints, and sometimes grant their requests, which no one else would dare even to report.

The Mayor de la Plaza, Juan Gomez, was next in authority to Fernandez. His duties were those of commandant or executive officer of the troops about the capital. He was a handsome, soldierly looking man, who in the army had won the approval of Lopez by his courage in fighting and his brutal treatment of his men.

The Chief of Police may also be counted as having been a member of the government, as he was the head spy, and the lower class of people were in more immediate terror of him than of any of the others. For this post, Lopez, like his father before him, always selected a man who delighted in cruelty, and who would resort to any measure to extort from servants and slaves the secrets of their masters and mistresses. At this time the office was held by Captain Matias Sanabria, a man whose fidelity in wickedness it was supposed would have saved him from the fate that afterwards befell him, as it befell hundreds of others whom he had denounced.

To the conclave of persons mentioned above, Benigno Lopez, the younger brother of the President, should be added. He held no official position, and it was known that he had long been under the suspicion of his brother, but yet none of the officials dared refuse to recognize him as a man to be consulted and treated with consideration. Whenever a member of the Lopez family went through the streets, the people had long understood it to be their duty to stand, hat in hand, till he had passed, and as no order had ever been given to make an exception in the case of Benigno, it would have been dan-



gerous even for the Vice-President to have shown him any disrespect.

Except to the above-described persons it was not known that anything of an unusual nature had occurred below, until the evening of the 21st of February. It was known by them on the 19th. On that day I called on Berges, and, as always, he told me that there was no news from the army. He said, however, that we should hear something of importance very soon. He must have known at that time that the ironclads were above Humaita. To show the utter ignorance which we were in of the real situation, I will transcribe from my journal the entry of that day :—

“ *Wednesday, February 19th.* — Went to visit the Minister, who says there is nothing new, but that something will happen very soon. He asked me to send Manlove to his office tomorrow. The Italian Consul called on us in the evening, and he says that a great battle has taken place, which resulted, as they all do, in a grand triumph. He also says that the enemy are in great force in the Chaco, and that there has been no communication by that road for eight days. Our friends Candida, Conchita, and Dolores Casal came in from Limpio.”

What orders Lopez had given to be observed in the event that the ironclads should pass above him and cut off his communication with the capital will probably never be known, as he soon after arrested, and finally executed, every one of those who could have known them. It is probable that he had not given any, taking it for granted that every man, woman, and child, if the enemy should attempt a landing at Asuncion, would turn out to repel the invaders. Anything short of that in his eyes was always treason.

We, however, who lived there, had inferred, from what we could learn of the military situation, that, as soon as the squadron should pass Humaita, the war would be over. By land Lopez was completely invested, and if communication by the river were cut off it did not seem possible that he could escape with any considerable portion of his army. It is probable that the officials in command there were of the same



opinion. When the news came, therefore, that the ironclads had passed, they thought themselves lost; and as the Vice-President had no authority in military matters, and neither Fernandez nor Venancio Lopez dared take the responsibility of any independent orders, a meeting, consisting of Sanchez, Fernandez, Berges, Benitez, and Venancio Lopez, was held to deliberate on the unexpected crisis. Had there been one of the number who had ever entertained a thought of a revolution, or of resisting the wish of Lopez, it would have been easy at this time to have left him to inevitable destruction. Had Berges, Fernandez, or Don Venancio then seized the telegraph and pretended to act by supreme orders, the whole country above the Tebicuari would have been as absolutely in his power as ever it had been in that of Lopez. But no such thought had, in all probability, ever entered the mind of a single one of them; and they were so completely spell-bound by the dreadful tyranny that had so long enthralled them, that no one, so far as any evidence now exists, or in the belief of any intelligent living person, had any other idea than to do what they supposed would be the will of Lopez if he could make it known to them. What that will was they could only infer from the threats which had been made through the *Semanario* that the allies would never enter Asuncion but to find it abandoned by its people or destroyed like a second Moscow. Yet every one of them was soon after arrested and accused of having been at that time and for months before engaged in a conspiracy to overthrow him, and all of them (save only the Vice-President) were, for their blind fidelity, tortured and executed.

The result of these deliberations, of which no one but themselves had any knowledge, was the conclusion that they must defend the town as best they could with the few hundred men they had at command. The only fortification they had to oppose to the invulnerable ironclads was a little fort standing on a small bluff nearly opposite the town and below the landing. All the available guns had long before been carried below, to strengthen the fortifications around Humaita. Some



three or four field-pieces, however, had been left as unserviceable, and a large, new cannon of a hundred and fifty pounds calibre, just finished, had never left the arsenal. With great effort this was carried to the top of the bluff before the ironclads appeared. Thus defenceless was Asuncion when the dreaded ironclads, that had been months, or rather years, getting ready for action, moved upon the exposed city.



## CHAPTER XVII.

New Members of the American Legation. — Dr. Carreras and Señor Rodriguez. — They become my Guests. — Madam Lynch sends her Valuables. — Dispersion of the Paraguayan Residents. — The English Engineers. — Bombardment of the Fort. — Flight of the Ironclads. — Our Servant Basilio. — Watts and Manlove. — They get into Difficulty. — Scene at the Police-Office. — Strategy of Lopez. — Attack on the Ironclads. — Its Failure.

WHEN, afterwards, it was found that the allies, with their characteristic sluggishness and inefficiency, did not follow up their advantage, but allowed Lopez to open communications and receive supplies through the Chaco, the members of this council hastened to denounce each other to Lopez. Benitez, Gomez, and Sanabria, being first to accuse, were permitted to remain at their posts, while Sanchez and Berges were immediately called below to answer for their conduct.

This, however, could not be done for several days. In the mean while the evacuation went on. On the morning of the 22d, the people came in larger numbers to deposit their most valuable effects with me, and I saw that I must have more assistance than that of my single secretary for the labors that were crowding upon me. I therefore engaged Mr. Bliss and Major Manlove to enter into my employ and become members of the Legation. Manlove had a room in a house adjoining mine. This house had been leased by a German of the name of Carlos Ulrich, from whom I immediately rented the whole building and premises. I sent a note to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which I stated that finding it necessary, under the peculiar circumstances, to increase the number of persons in my service, I sent a list of all who were in my Legation and for whom I should expect Legation privileges. In this list were the names of Bliss and Manlove, though through inadvertence



that of Masterman, who had been long living in my house, was omitted.

This note I despatched on the 22d, and on the evening of the 23d I received an answer from Minister Berges, in which no exception was taken to my receiving any of the persons named into the Legation. In my note I had not specified the character or position of the different persons I had thus added to my suite. But the word *service*, as used by me, had been mistranslated, and Berges had understood from it that I had engaged them as servants; and as persons of their known standing and position in society would not be recognized by the police as servants, it would be better, to save them and me from annoyance, that they should not expose themselves on the streets, as the patrols had orders to arrest all who might remain in town. To correct this impression that I had taken Manlove and Bliss into my service in the capacity of servants, and also to correct the omission of Mr. Masterman's name, I sent another list the next day to be delivered to Minister Berges; but he had already left town. It was said he had gone out to Luque, the new capital. I endeavored to send this note after him, but no one dared to take it. The mayor of the plaza, the Chief of Police, and the conductor of the railroad, were in turn applied to the same day, but they all refused to receive it; and the next day I learned, incidentally, that Berges had gone below, and I had no notice that anybody had been named to act in his place. So the letter remained on my table for several weeks, and was only sent on the 4th of April with a note explaining why it had not been sent at the time it was written.

There was one man at this time in Paraguay, who had long before, in anticipation of the emergency that had now arisen, asked me to afford him shelter in the Legation. This was Dr. Carreras. He had made himself so obnoxious to the Brazilians, while at the head of the government of Montevideo, and had so energetically opposed the invasion of the Banda Oriental by Flores and his gaucho band, that he feared, and with reason, he would meet the fate of the hero of Pay-



sandu, Leandro Gomez, if he should fall into the hands of the allies. I told him that whenever the danger might seem near, I should have a room for him in my house. On the 22d, his friend Rodriguez, formerly *Chargé d'Affaires* of the Oriental Republic, came in from the *quinta* where they both were residing, and said that Carreras would then, if it were still agreeable to me, accept my offer of refuge. He said that for himself he would be obliged to go with the multitude into the interior, unless I could find room for him too in my house. I told him I not only had room enough, but that he would be most welcome. They accordingly both came in on the evening of the 22d, and took up their residence, as my guests, in the Legation. They were never to leave it again till they were taken off to be starved, tortured, and executed.

During the day I received a message from Madam Lynch, saying she wanted to see me. I went to her house, as requested, and found her in great tribulation. She had before intimated that the time might come when she should ask me to do her a favor. She had always seemed to have a distrust of me, which I ascribed to the fact that I had never professed that enthusiasm and admiration for Lopez that everybody else in the country was obliged to profess. And yet she saw that the time might come when she herself might desire to flee for refuge to my house, and she endeavored to keep up the appearance of friendly relations. On this occasion she questioned me of what the Brazilians would do now they had passed Humaita. I told her that they would probably keep Lopez and his army shut up where he was, and advance on Asuncion with such force as to take it, and then, by cutting off his supplies at all points, he would be obliged to capitulate or else to attack them in their intrenchments, which, with his unequal forces, could not be done successfully. The cause was lost, and she could see it as well as I. "Some natural tears she shed," and asked me if I would receive her most valuable articles into my house. I replied that I had done that for many other people, and had offered to do it for all ; that if she thought her property would be



more safe there than elsewhere, she could send it, and I could answer that while there it would never be taken by the allies unless they forcibly violated the United States Legation. She was very despondent, and said that she did not know what would become of her, and seemed to be aware that she neither deserved nor could expect any mercy if she fell into the hands of the enemy. She intimated that she might, at the last moment, apply to me for shelter. Her house furniture, which was very rich and enormously expensive, would of course fall into vandal hands if the city were taken. But being an Englishwoman, she should look to that government to enforce restitution. The ambitious plans that had induced her to invest such large sums of money in furniture and adornments not to be found elsewhere except in palaces seemed to have miscarried. Two hundred thousand dollars, the price of the toil and sweat and blood of thousands of half-fed, overworked Paraguayans seemed about to fall into the hands of the hated Brazilians, and the illusion of the Lopez dynasty, with her first-born as the heir apparent to the throne of her paramour, and her other sons as royal princes, had all vanished, and she then only thought of saving her life and the lives of her children, and escaping with her ill-gotten gains to Europe.

The people were not allowed to remove to those neighboring districts where they had friends and relatives, but were obliged to go where the wretch Sanabria, the Chief of Police, ordered them to go. It was impossible to find carts or other means of conveyance for a tenth part of the people to carry away with them those things most indispensable for use in the interior. The streets outward leading from the city were therefore filled with women and children, — for no men were left to emigrate except foreigners, — bearing bundles of clothes, cooking-utensils, and such scanty food as they could lay their hands on, and which might serve them till they reached the resting-place of banishment.

It was a sad sight to witness young children and delicate women — in some cases old and infirm — trudging through



the dust, sand, and heat, towards the Trinidad, San Lorenzo, or the Recoleta, with their heavy burdens on their heads and in their arms. Ignorant and superstitious, their home attachments were none the less strong on that account. They knew they were going at the order of a power that to them had ever appeared supreme, and which must be obeyed with blind submission. Few murmurs or complaints were heard. They had learned that the least sign of restiveness or the least symptom of discontent would subject them to stripes, fetters, and imprisonment; and they silently turned their backs on their humble homes, and groped their way with suppressed tears and smothered sighs they knew not whither. Very few of them were ever to return. The most of them were to perish of hardship and cruelty when nature could endure no more. Before the order of evacuation, I had heard of numerous instances of women of the lower order being sent to prison and kept for months in the stocks, for simply expressing such a natural wish as that the war might end. But after the evacuation I was told that there were hundreds of wretches in the improvised prisons of the new capital chained to the ground for having given way to expressions of sorrow.

The English engineers at work in the arsenal were greatly elated when they heard the Brazilians had forced the passage at Humaita, and as they believed the town would be taken by the allies within a few days they were desirous of remaining, for then their imprisonment would be at an end; whereas, if they went into the interior, they would still be in Lopez's power, from which they might never escape. They therefore asked permission to occupy the rear rooms of my premises. I granted their request, but advised them to get the consent of the government before taking a step that might not be approved, and which, if not approved, would subject them to suspicion and persecution. The men went in a body, therefore, to prefer their request. It was granted; and the next day four men with their families, and two widows, each with two or three children, twenty-two persons in all, came and occupied the rooms. In all there were forty-two persons under my roof.



On the morning of the 24th it was evident from appearances that the gunboats were near. The only fort to oppose them was situate only about forty rods from my house, and in a line with the street on which it stood. From the great activity that we observed in and about the fort, it was evident that something extraordinary was anticipated. We could also see a small body of cavalry stationed back of a hill, where it could not be seen from the river, and evidently for the purpose of making an attack on any forces that might effect a landing.

The strength of the fort consisted in a large hundred-and-fifty-pounder, so badly mounted that it could not be handled, and a few little field-pieces that were utterly impotent and harmless against ironclads. The large gun was made in Paraguay, and was but just finished when the news of the passage of Humaita was received. It was hardly got into position when the ironclads appeared. The first shot passed high above the approaching vessels; and though the muzzle was depressed as much as possible, it was found that it was utterly useless without digging away the edge of the bluff on which it stood. From the roofs of the houses we could see the tops of the steamers' chimneys as they steamed up, and, when as near as they cared to venture, discharged their heavy pieces. They fired shell, whose harsh, hissing sound and explosion in the air enabled us to trace their course. We could see the Paraguayans working like beavers about their big gun. It was not discharged more than three or four times, and there were but few shots from their field-pieces. The firing of the Brazilians was very wild, and almost in every instance they fired much too high, and, as I afterwards found, very wide of the mark. From the roofs we could see the chimneys of the steamers move slowly up, and then drop down again as soon as a couple of shot had been discharged. The little fort, however, after a few shots, almost ceased firing, and we expected every moment to see the gunboats return and steam up by the fort. They could have done this without the slightest danger. The only large gun



was powerless to harm them, as it could not be depressed to touch them at long range, and the closer they came the safer they were. The shot from the little field-pieces were as harmless as paper pellets against the heavy plates of the ironclads. But after discharging some thirty shot and shell, receiving no harm to themselves, the gunboats again fell back, and did not return. We all supposed that they were waiting for other vessels to come up, and that then they would pass the fort, effect a landing, and possess the town. But hour passed after hour and day after day, and our ears were not again cheered by the sound of their cannon ; and it was only after weeks of impatience and anxiety that we learned that, after such an inglorious and cowardly exhibition of themselves, the ironclads had turned tail and run away.

They had achieved a Brazilian victory, and they returned to announce it to the world. They went down as far as Tayi, some two or three leagues above Humaita, where, under the protection of their own fortifications on the bank of the river, they came to, — the officers to be decorated and promoted for their valor, and the men to rest and recuperate after their arduous labors.

It was months before we, who were in Asuncion, could learn anything of what the allies had achieved by this approach to Asuncion or the object of it. In time, however, we learned that it had been proclaimed at Buenos Aires and Rio as a great naval victory, compared with which the battle of the Nile, of Trafalgar, Mobile, and Fort Fisher were mere petty skirmishes ; that the invincible Brazilian fleet had passed above Humaita to find a Gibraltar just below Asuncion, which had been reduced, and the fleet had passed it, and held Asuncion an easy prey at its mercy ; that Minister Berges had come off under a flag of truce to the flag-ship, and advised her commander that the capital had been evacuated by all the inhabitants, and that to bombard the place would be only a useless destruction of the property of innocent people, many of whom were foreigners ; and that with that magnanimity characteristic of a brave and chivalrous people, especially the Brazilians, they



had left everything untouched, while they reported that Asuncion had fallen, and therefore the war was virtually at an end. To this day it is generally believed in Rio Janeiro that on the 24th of February the Brazilian fleet achieved a great victory. Great pains were taken to create this impression, and the only persons to contradict it are the few members of the United States Legation who witnessed the battle and still survive.

But being as yet ignorant of the perfection to which the Brazilians had attained in the art of carrying on war without exposing themselves to danger, we could not but believe for several days that at any moment we might hear the guns of the returning vessels. We were, perhaps, selfish in our hopes, for we felt that if Asuncion were taken we should be safe beyond the reach of Lopez; but until then, or until he himself was a captive, we felt we were still exposed to his savage fury.

When we found the gunboats did not return for several days, we nourished the hope that they had gone below to assist in rendering the siege of Humaita more perfect. As we knew that it was completely surrounded on all sides by heavy trenches, so strongly fortified that Lopez could not cut his way out by land, and as the allies had now the command of the river, we thought the time had come when he must either capitulate or carry out his oft-repeated threat to perish at the head of his last legion. No one, indeed, believed he would end his inglorious career, unmarked thus far by an act of courage, by a deed of heroism. In spite of his espionage and his long reign of terror, everybody had come to know that he was as cowardly as he was cruel. But in whatever way his career might close, we took it for granted its end was near. He could not possibly have provisions enough for more than a few days, and his communications were all cut off. We saw, as we thought, that his doom was sealed, and that he would never be able to carry out his gloomy threat, that, if fall he must, it would only be when the whole Paraguayan people were exterminated. We then thought that, though nearly all the men in the country had perished during



the war, yet the larger part of the women and children would survive to defeat the sanguinary purpose of their self-styled protector.



A STREET IN ASUNCION AFTER THE EVACUATION.

It was astonishing to see the rapidity with which the capital had been evacuated. In two days after the order had been promulgated, not a soul, with two or three exceptions, save the police and military, were left in town. The exceptions were Duffield and Carter, Americans, a Brazilian named Francisco, and an Englishman some eighty years of age, who was known among his countrymen by the name of "Old William." Duffield lived just across the street, and lingered behind, taking shelter in the Legation with the English, who had come into it without either permission or remonstrance from anybody. Old William remained because he was too old and infirm to get away without assistance, and was known to have



been for a long time a helpless dependant upon me, though he lived in a house some forty rods distant from mine. Every two or three days since my last arrival in the country he had been in the habit of coming to my house and getting each time a bit of beef, a little yerba, and, if it could be spared, a little sugar, a little chipa, some salt, pepper, and occasionally a half-bottle of caña, which he would take away and live upon so long as they lasted, when he would come again to replenish his stores. With these exceptions and the United States Legation the city was entirely depopulated. On the evening of the evacuation I took a ride through the streets, and not a soul was to be seen save the numerous *rodillas* of policemen who were sauntering about or standing on the street-corners. It was a sickening sight to behold, and a forcible commentary on the beauties of a strong government.

During these anxious days, and for some time before, our little child, four months old, thus early fated to figure in events of historic interest, was dangerously sick. As usual, anxiety and watchfulness prostrated the mother, and it was clear that had I at that time gone into the interior it would have been at the risk, if not at the sacrifice, of both their lives. That was not the only consideration, however, which influenced my action. Months before, I had written to the State Department in anticipation of what had now occurred, and had said that I should not leave my post unless carried away as a prisoner. I little thought at the time how near I was to leaving it, some months later, in that character.

Our visitors from Limpio, who had shared our hopes that the day of deliverance was at hand when they heard the sound of the Brazilian cannon, soon began to grow uneasy as they found that it was delayed. They feared their remaining with us would subject their family to that vicarious punishment which Lopez was accustomed to apply to the families and friends of those whom he could not touch. They feared to remain longer, and on the 29th I mounted the pretty Conchita and the petite Dolores on horseback, and sent them home, accompanied by the ever-faithful Paraguayan servant,



Basilio. The other one, the amiable and good-natured Anita, would not leave us then while the child was so sick, and the mother worn down with care and anxiety for its life. It was always a mystery to me why Basilio and his mother, Melchora, were permitted to remain in my service. I supposed that he, as well as every other Paraguayan servant, was frequently called before the police to give a report of everything they knew that transpired in my house; but as they could never have anything to tell of any importance, and as I could not prove that they were ever interrogated, I regarded it as one of the necessities of the situation, and thought little of it. I knew Basilio desired to serve me faithfully and well, and that if he acted the spy it was because he dared not do otherwise. He had been recognized always since my return from the United States as my servant, and I knew he wished to remain with me; but had he received the first hint from headquarters that he should leave me, he would not have dared to remain a single day. After the town had been evacuated, he was most useful as a forager. The people, except those who were foreigners, living near the capillas of Trinidad and the Recoleta, were still allowed to remain there, and there was a sort of market at each place, where generally could be had fresh beef, eggs, chickens, mandioca, and oranges. The supply for our household of more than forty persons made good loads for two horses, and every morning Basilio was sent off to bring in such needed provisions as he could find.

For several days after the evacuation, the English and Americans, who, instead of obeying the general order to retire into the interior, had come to my house, ventured to stroll about in the immediate vicinity; and this might have continued some time longer but for the imprudence of Manlove, who had not yet learned to conform to the circumstances by which he was surrounded.

During the days of the evacuation the people were eager to sell such things as chickens, ducks, and even cows, as they could not take them with them, and if left behind they would probably never see them again. I therefore enjoined Manlove



to purchase whatever might serve to maintain us in the event of a protracted siege, and of our being unable to obtain supplies from the interior. Among other things he purchased two or three cows, which he tethered in a vacant yard a few squares from my own house, where the grass was rank and abundant. On the evening of the 3d of March, ten days after the evacuation, he and Watts, the hero of the battle of Riachuelo, started on horseback to go and look after these animals. They had galloped across the Plaza Vieja, and were just turning a corner, when they encountered nine policemen. They were ordered to stop, and told that they were violating the city ordinance, which prohibited galloping through the streets. Watts replied they were only going to look after some animals, and were doing no harm, as there were no people in the streets or in the town. The police sergeant replied that they could go on, but that they must report themselves the next day to the police-office. Watts then turned back, and had Manlove done the same there would have been an end of the matter. The American, feeling indignant at being stopped, said he would go and see the Chief of Police. So he turned back, and rode to the police-office. His conduct here will show so well the temper and character of the man, that I will give the conversation that took place between him and the Chief. On entering the office he met the Chief, Sanabria, and undertook to tell him, in his imperfect Spanish, what had occurred. The Chief replied: "You were very rude to the Mayor of the Plaza. He passed your door, and you did not salute him." "Yes," replied Manlove, "I did not salute him; but the reason was, I thought it was you." "And why would you not salute me?" "Because I rank you. In my country I am a major, and you are only a captain." "Wait there by the door," said the enraged Chief, and strode off in anger to get orders as to what he should do with so contumacious a *gringo*.

On returning from a *paseo* that evening, a half-hour after this occurrence, I learned from Watts of what had taken place in the street. I knew the character of Sanabria, and



that he was one of Lopez's most trusted and willing tools ; that he was hated and feared by all, both natives and foreigners, and as Manlove did not return for an hour or more, I walked down to the police-office to look for him. I found him sitting under the corridor of the building, with at least a dozen policemen guarding him. I asked him what he was doing there. He replied the Chief had ordered him to wait there, and had gone off. I told him to mount his horse instantly, and go directly home. He started to do so, when the policemen gathered around to stop him. I said to them : " Let him alone, he belongs to me " (*Dejale, el pertenece á me*). Astonished at what to them seemed great audacity, they stood confounded, and Manlove mounted his horse and rode away ; and before Sanabria returned he was safe as any man could be within the walls of the United States Legation.

I regretted this affair, as I knew that it would be reported to Lopez, and would greatly enrage him, and that he would revenge himself in some way, not only on Manlove, but on everybody in the Legation. There had never been a time for forty years that such an insult to an officer of El Supremo would not have been followed by the speedy execution of the offender ; and I knew that if Manlove fell into the hands of the police again, he would only escape through death's door. I therefore told him if he went out again it would be at his own risk, I would not again interfere in his behalf. He was not to indulge in the luxury of his violent temper at the expense of the safety and comfort of forty others.

This affair did not have the immediate result which we all anticipated. I was obliged, however, to enter into a correspondence in regard to it, and to make explanations in behalf of Manlove which were so far accepted that the matter was dropped.

It was now evident that the passage of the Brazilian squadron above Humaita was to prove, like all the preceding victories of the allies, fruitless. Anybody but a Brazilian commander, having Lopez where he was, would have forced him and his whole army to capitulate or starve within two weeks.



But to our surprise and disgust we soon learned that the Paraguayans were soon after sending large numbers of cattle across the river into the Chaco, and passing them down the right bank to a point nearly opposite Humaita, and thence towing and swimming them across a second time, landing them safely within their own lines. In the mean time the ironclads were lying idle at Tayi. Such a tremendous victory as they had achieved was not to be repeated oftener than once in three or four months. They must wait till the news of their exploits could be announced in Rio, till the end of the war could be again proclaimed by the Emperor, and his heroic veterans congratulated and rewarded for their dash and valor.

In the mean time, while the allies were literally wasting away from inaction, Lopez was preparing for them another surprise. His own safety was ever the first consideration, and he had been contending against the Brazilians so long, he had learned that after a victory they would give him several months' quiet in which to recuperate. But though vanquished and surrounded, he still kept up the offensive. The Brazilians were rejoicing that he was cooped up with a force so small that he and his whole army, consisting as they said of a mere handful, must soon surrender. To dispel this illusion, Lopez resorted to his favorite device of sending a force on an apparently hopeless errand, by which it would be made to appear that he had more troops than he needed, and it mattered not how many he sacrificed.

On this occasion his expedient was to send a force of some four hundred men in canoes to attack the ironclads that were lying idle and exposed at Tayi. Foolhardy and stupid as this would seem to any one not familiar with Brazilian strategy, it was nearly successful the first time it was attempted.

Two of the ironclads were lying at anchor a short distance from each other, with banked fires, and Lopez had prepared a large number of canoes, in which some four hundred picked men were placed, with orders to go and capture them. An order from Lopez was to his men like a decree of fate. They



were to make the attempt without flinching, even though inevitable death awaited them. Their orders were to attack simultaneously the two vessels, and board them if possible, and get possession. It was a night attack. The canoes, filled with men armed with cutlasses and hooks, stole out from their hiding-places at a little past midnight and drifted down towards the unsuspecting enemy. All was silent and dark, and the canoes crept along unheard and unsuspected by the sentinels on deck, who were, as usual, faithfully sleeping at their posts. By some mistake or miscalculation, the force sent to attack one of the vessels reached it while the other party was still some distance from its intended prize. The Brazilians, unsuspecting of danger, were fast asleep, a large part of the crew lying on the deck of the vessel. The first symptom of alarm was a shout from the Paraguayans, as they sprang on board, and with a yell began to cut down the stupefied Brazilians. It was but the work of a few minutes to clear the deck, but the vessel had been made so as to guard against being successfully boarded. The men below, on hearing the noise above, had firmly closed and fastened the iron doors leading to the deck, so they could not be reached by the assailants. The Paraguayans were in possession of the vessel, though they could do nothing with her without forcing open the hold, and that would require considerable time. They, however, ran up the Paraguayan flag, and raised a shout of triumph. The other vessel had caught the alarm, and before the canoes that were making for her had got near, was ready to receive them. The assailants, therefore, after vainly endeavoring to board, and, losing a large part of their men, made for the other vessel, and climbing on board, all joined in the desperate effort to make an opening into the hold. In the mean time the other vessel quickly fanned her banked fires into a heat, and as soon as steam could be got up, and the anchor raised, instead of running away, as was to have been expected from the antecedents of the squadron, came to the rescue of her mate. The light that was breaking showed the deck of the huge ironclad cov-



ered with Paraguayans, and the Paraguayan flag flying at the poop. These poor victims, of course, were utterly defenceless against the heavy guns of the other vessel. Their plan had evidently miscarried, and on seeing the other gunboat approach they could have easily escaped. But Lopez had ordered them to capture the vessel, and bring it with them as a prize, and they knew the fate that awaited them if they returned without having fulfilled his order. Death to them was inevitable. If they did not perish then and there, a worse death awaited them at the hands of Lopez. The big guns of the other vessel, filled with grape and *metralla*, belched forth upon them, and soon not a soul was to be seen on the deck. Of the four hundred who had made the attack, only about twenty escaped back to the camp of Lopez. Of these, some were shot, and the rest set to work on the trenches, where they were flogged and starved till they died. No such traitors ever were allowed to participate in the glory of another battle.

This, like nearly every action of the war, was claimed as a victory by both sides. The *Semanario* boasted that the Paraguayans had captured and held for a considerable time one of the enemy's ironclads, flaunting their flag triumphantly in the face of the enemy over their prize. The Brazilians boasted, as usual, of another great victory, in which those who were locked up in the hold, and those who in their fright jumped overboard and were drowned, all alike performed prodigies of valor.

Though the affair was so disastrous in one way to Lopez, in another it had its desired effect. The desperation and wastefulness shown confounded and confused the allies, who had imagined that the Paraguayans were past further resistance. They now found that the enemy was still unconquered and audacious as ever, and took good care not to be surprised in that way again. Such a rash and unexpected assault as this could not be expected to succeed, by any possibility, except the first time it was made. Its only possible chance of success consisted in its apparent impracticability. Lulled by the sense of perfect security within their iron walls, it was possible they might be



surprised and captured, though the chances were as a hundred to one against it. After one attempt, however, it was madness to think they might be surprised a second time. Nevertheless, a second attack of the same kind was made some three or four weeks later, and with results even more disastrous than the first. The Brazilians were this time prepared, and all the attacking party, with the exception of about a dozen, were killed. Enough returned to tell the story of the hopelessness of the slaughter to which they had been exposed. Yet this did not change the plans of Lopez. A third force was sent on the same errand, when nothing but inevitable death awaited them. It was a kind of warfare that suited Lopez. His men could not desert or surrender, and the act of sending them in such numbers to hopeless slaughter would show to the enemy that he had enough and to spare; at the same time it would prove to the world how valiant they were, and how devoted to him and their country.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

Routine of Life at the Legation. — Captain Fidanza. — Fears entertained by Lopez's Mother. — Her Isolation. — She asks for Protection. — Don Saturnino Bedoya. — His Imprisonment. — Lopez's Flight from Paso Pucu. — Passage of the Army through the Chaco. — Colonel Martinez. — Massacre of Prisoners. — Extracts from my Diary. — The Vice-President and Berges called below. — Inertness of the Allies. — Colonel Paulino Alén. — The Allies occupy Paso Pucu. — They closely invest Humaita. — Colonel Alén escapes to Lopez. — His Fate. — Martinez evacuates Humaita. — He capitulates in the Chaco.

IT was about six weeks after the evacuation of Asuncion when we heard that Lopez, having left his stronghold at Humaita, had escaped with the larger part of his army, and was fortifying at a point some fifty miles higher up the river and just above the confluence of the Tebicuari with the Paraguay. And such was the fact. While we were indulging the hope that the war was near its end, and that a considerable part of the population would yet survive the fall of the tyrant, we learned that the imbecile wretches who but lately had him completely shut up at their mercy had allowed him to escape, while they were rejoicing over the great feat of passing Humaita and firing a few shells at Asuncion. We had fancied our own deliverance was at hand, and that the caged tiger was fast in the leash. Our indignation and contempt for the Brazilians was intense. At that time I did not anticipate any great personal danger to myself or family, but I feared that Lopez would yet have all those who, not belonging to the Legation, were still living in it. I foresaw that after a time he would be driven from the Tebicuari; and if he were forced to retire to the mountains, I knew he would not leave me nor anybody about me behind him. Often and anxiously we discussed our situation. The inaction and supineness of the



allies was a mystery to us; and to my oft-repeated question to my guests, "Why don't the allies move? why don't they follow up their advantages?" the reply was always the same, — "*Son Brasileros*" ("They are Brazilians").

And yet up to this time, and until near the middle of July, notwithstanding our anxiety and ignorance of what was going on elsewhere, and the lack of many things that we had been accustomed to regard as the very necessities of life, we were the happiest people by far in Paraguay. We could get beef, chickens, eggs, Indian corn, mandioca, and the Paraguayan tea, or yerba maté, so that we did not really suffer for anything. In fact, this was the happiest period during all our residence after my return to Paraguay. The English families in the rear were all decent and respectable people; and though, crowded in as they were with nothing to do, they had their petty bickerings, they were so happy in the belief that they were beyond the power of Lopez that they counted their minor troubles and discomforts as nothing. Carreras and Rodriguez were both highly educated and refined gentlemen, and the latter had an exuberance of spirits that made him a most agreeable companion. The mornings, from the hour of taking the early cup of maté till breakfast at eleven o'clock, were passed by us in literary avocations. Carreras and Rodriguez were engaged in the study of the English language, though the former spent much of his time writing out notes of his own times for me to use in this history; Masterman quietly pursued his scientific investigations in his own room; and Bliss was always reading anything in English, Spanish, French, or Portuguese that could add to his great stores of knowledge, that caused us all to regard him as a walking encyclopædia.

The breakfast was always followed by a few games at billiards, as fortunately I had a fine large American billiard-table in my house, and then all indulged in the luxury of a siesta. After this came another maté, and after that books and writing again, and long and anxious discussions of the situation till five or six o'clock, when I alone, or perhaps myself and wife,



would indulge in a *paseo* on horseback. The others, save only my secretary and servants, dared not venture into the streets, and would while away the time till sunset or dinner-time as best they could. After dinner we would play whist and chess till bedtime, and thus we filled up the days when nothing of an unusual character occurred outside of the Legation to divert our attention or lead us into new speculations on our darkening future.

During these days I would occasionally ride out as far as the *quinta* of the old Lady President, and sometimes would go out to that of Captain Fianza in Campo Grande, and at others would go as far as the house of my friends in Limpio, the Casal family. The latter being some six leagues from town, I would usually go out in the afternoon of one day and return on the following morning. The mother of Lopez and her younger daughter, Doña Rafaela, were always very glad to see me, and always treated me with the greatest kindness and attention. She hoped to learn from me something of the condition of her youngest son, Benigno, and of her son-in-law, the husband of Rafaela, both of whom she had heard were prisoners at the head-quarters of her merciless first-born. She said that she and her daughter were virtually prisoners within their own premises. Even her second son, Venancio, who yet remained at Asuncion, and whose country-house where he lived was within a mile of her own, was not permitted to visit them without the permission of his big brother; neither could the *practicante*, or native physician, come near her, though she were dying, without orders from her cruel and unnatural son. The native women of the neighborhood were afraid to visit her, and her own servants were unwilling spies of all her acts. Her *capataz*, or the manager of her estancia, was taken away a prisoner, for what cause she knew not; and the priest and *juez* (judge of the district) had also been carried off in irons. They were, however, well provided with everything in the way of provisions from their stores accumulated before the war. The old lady sometimes spoke of the possibility that the time might come when she



too might wish to flee to my house, though the contingency she referred to was in view of the threatened capture of the capital by the allies, for she feared that neither her sex nor her gray hairs would save her from the fury of the conquering army. She shared the fears which her son had impressed on the whole people, that if they should fall into the hands of the Brazilians they would all be massacred or carried away and sold into hopeless slavery.

I assured her that, if the time should ever come when she and her daughter might seek a refuge in my house, they should have all the protection my flag could afford. The old lady was evidently prompted to her generosity towards me to a great extent by self-interest. This is an ungracious thing to say, but truth compels it, as she was not noted for her liberality. On the contrary, she had been too thrifty, during the lifetime of her husband, to be a desirable neighbor. She not only managed her own estancias with great economy, but took advantage of the fear entertained by all of giving offence to any of her family to drive most usurious bargains. She had at times the monopoly of supplying beef to the capital; and if the supply from her own estancias were insufficient, she would purchase of others at her own price, which was not more than a half or a third of the actual value. Then, if she desired to purchase an estancia, she would get it on her own terms. She was seconded in all these doings by her husband, and the result was that many of the best estancias in the country had been wrested from their owners to enrich the Lopez family. Each one of her children had several of them, so that, at the time of Don Carlos's death, they all had princely estates. Notwithstanding this undue exercise of power, however, the old lady was generally respected. She would listen to the complaints and petitions of those who had fallen under the displeasure of the government, and often intercede in their behalf, and many persons owed to her good offices their liberation from prison or from service in the army.

But whatever was her disposition and whatever her motives in her liberality towards me, she was an object of pity



and commiseration. Her situation might be compared to that of a hen, that, having hatched out a brood of chickens, is horrified to find that one of them is a hawk and has begun devouring the others ; that he heeds not her clucking or her cries, but that he will go on killing one after another, and finally strike his ravenous beak in her own breast.

Some two months before the passage of the ironclads above Humaita, the delegation that was chosen to carry the diamond-hilted sword and gold scabbard, the golden inkstand, and books with golden covers a quarter of an inch thick, had proceeded to head-quarters to discharge their agreeable task. The delegation was composed of men who had been engaged in the civil service in various capacities. They were all men distinguished for their loyalty and patriotism, that is, those who on all public occasions were most prompt to make speeches eulogistic of the great Lopez, and to protest their resolution to shed the last drop of their blood in defence of the sacred cause of liberty, of which he was the great champion. Unfortunately, of this delegation of ardent patriots the most of them failed to come back. At the ceremony of presentation, the delegates through their chairman, Saturnino Bedoya, the brother-in-law of Lopez, expressed their gratitude to him as their saviour and defender, covering him with the most fulsome adulation, as if he were indeed a hero instead of the heartless coward they all knew him to be. To their expressions of loyalty and devotion Lopez responded, promising to lead his brave legions to renewed victories, and fall at last, if fall he must, at the head of his columns.

The ceremony over, the most of the delegates, including Bedoya and Urbietta, the literary *confrère* of Bliss in the play of the Triple Alliance, and who was fool enough actually to believe in Lopez, were arrested and loaded down with fetters. Of the twelve who went below, only three ever returned. The others were all kept in prison, and subjected to the most horrid cruelties ; and those of them who did not expire under the torture, or, as Lopez expressed it in his official papers, die a natural death, were shot, or perhaps bayoneted to save ammunition.



The flight of Lopez from Paso Pucu was characteristic of the man, as his first care was for his own safety. Previously to the passage of the squadron above Humaita, he had scarcely ventured outside of his cave for months, lest some stray shot might put an end to his valuable life. But as it now appeared doubtful whether he could long maintain himself where he was, and his cave could no longer protect him, he ignominiously ran away. Disguising himself so as not to be recognized in the night either by friend or foe, he stole out of his cave at nightfall and, accompanied by a single soldier as a guide, sneaked away in the darkness in the same way that he had skulked away from Itapiru more than a year and a half before. In this way he crept towards Humaita, whence he passed over the river to the Chaco, and from there he sent back orders for the larger part of the forces to follow him, taking with them as many of the guns as there was any possibility of their being able to drag through the swamps and thickets of the Chaco to the mouth of the Tebicuari, where he had decided to make his next stronghold. The success with which this retreat was accomplished is astonishing, considering how easy it would have been for the allies to have cut it off entirely. The only explanation of it I can give is that so often given by the poor Orientales when speaking of the stupid inaction of the enemy, — "*Son Brasileiros*" ("They are Brazilians"). It was not only necessary for the worn and wasted Paraguayans, after reaching the Chaco, to drag their guns and other munitions of war through swamps and forests that the allies had declared utterly impenetrable, but to cross at least one large river, the Bermejo, and again cross the Paraguay at San Fernando, the point selected for the new camp. All this while the allies were celebrating the great feat of the passage above Humaita, and the bells of Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro were rung, and bonfires were lighted, and people were bid to rejoice, for Lopez and his army were in a trap, Asuncion had been taken, and the end of the war was at hand.

Lopez, having no further use for his cave at Paso Pucu, gave orders to abandon that part of his camp, and contract



the lines to a comparatively small space immediately around Humaita, which he left in charge of two of his most trusted lieutenants, Alén and Martinez. They were both feared and disliked, as they were believed to be too willing to execute the cruel orders of their master. Martinez was more trusted than any other man whom Lopez permitted to come near him. For two years he served as his body-guard, never sleeping at the same time with his chief, but keeping watch at his door, permitting no one to enter unless it were the mistress he had summoned. His wife, a pretty, plump, laughing, and heedless young woman, had been honored beyond any other Paraguayan woman, as she was made the companion and intimate of Madam Lynch, with whom she lived when the latter was in Asuncion, or at her country-house at Patiño-cué. But notwithstanding the confidence that Lopez had in Martinez, he did not dare to trust him with an independent command. No service or proofs of fidelity could disarm Lopez of the impression that all around him were secretly his enemies. It was from this distrust that Alén was ordered to share the command with Martinez; each was to be a watch and spy on the other, and at the least sign of flagging, or the first inclination to treat or make terms with the enemy, he was to arrest him and send him before their common master. They were left but a mere handful of men to stay the advance of ten times their number. Their orders were the same that Lopez always gave out, — never under any circumstances to surrender, but to fight till the last man was killed. To do less than that, in Lopez's eyes, was treason, which would not only subject them to be punished, if they ever fell into his power again, with torture and death, but would expose their families to every indignity that the malign genius of Lopez could devise. The officers of lower grade knew full well that the most pleasing service they could do to Lopez was to act the spy on their superiors and report directly to him. The situation of these two commanders, who had not the least confidence in each other, and each of whom knew that the other was watching to report any act or expression that might imply a doubt of



the infallibility of his chief, was most trying. They were both men of reckless courage, for Lopez would have none others in high or responsible positions. Like Cromwell, he would have none under him who were not incapable of fear. He did not, however, like Cromwell, bid those who did not come up to his standard to return to their homes, but had them publicly executed.

At the time of the flight of Lopez from Paso Pucu, there was a large number of prisoners in his camp. The most of them were prisoners of war, though some were foreigners who had been so unfortunate as to be in the country at the commencement of hostilities. Others were Paraguayans, including his Vice-President, his Minister of Foreign Affairs, the bearers of the golden presents, with his brother-in-law, Bedoya, at their head, and others who had incurred the displeasure of the President of the Republic. Of the first class all were massacred, except a few of the higher grade of officers, who were reserved to be driven to his new encampment, there to be tortured, that he might feast his eyes with their miseries, and drink in the music, so sweet to his ears, of their shrieks and dying groans. They were to furnish a *bonne bouche* which he could not bear to lose.

While this scene of horrors was being enacted at headquarters, we, at Asuncion, were in complete ignorance of what was transpiring everywhere else. So far as we knew, there was no government left at either the old or the new capital. All the civil officials had gone to head-quarters. The old Vice-President and Berges had been called below to Humaita soon after the passage of the squadron above that point; and Benitez, the Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and Fernandez, the military commander at Asuncion, were summoned to San Fernando, to report to Lopez of what had transpired at Asuncion. Save that the police were as numerous and watchful as ever, we saw no signs of authority.

I will here give some brief extracts from my journal, as they will show how completely we were in the dark in respect to what was going on elsewhere.



" *Sunday, February 23d.* — The morning broke bright and clear ; no news of the ironclads ; people very much occupied in moving out of the capital, and by midday the city appeared abandoned.

" *Monday, February 24th.* — The day broke calm as usual, but rumors were in circulation that the ironclads were near Lambaré. At half past nine we heard firing from the battery between our house and the river, and very soon from the ironclads, that continued till near twelve, when it ceased. At 8 A. M. I sent a note to the Minister (Berges), but the bearer found the office closed, and could not find any one to whom to deliver it, nor any one who could tell him where the Minister was. From noon till nightfall silence prevailed.

" *Tuesday, February 25th.* — Silence through the day ; I sent Basilio to the Recoleta to buy meat and vegetables. Towards evening I took a ride through the streets, and met scarcely anybody, the city appearing to be deserted. Hester has now been sick for a week.

" *Wednesday, February 26th.* — Another day of silence, and we know nothing of what has happened since day before yesterday. The child continues sick.

" *Thursday, February 27th.* — The little one very bad, and the mother has not slept a moment during the whole night. 'T is said that Madam Lynch, Minister Berges, Benitez, and Riveros went on board the Salto at twelve o'clock last night to go down to the Tebicuari, where they are to cross over to the Chaco, and thence to Paso Pucu.

" *Monday, March 2d.* — Basilio went to get a passport to the Recoleta, but after waiting two hours, without being able to obtain it, returned. From the looks of the people, it seems as if matters were going very badly below.

" *Tuesday, March 3d.* — At 7 A. M. went to the *Ministerio* to complain of the treatment of Basilio by the *Gefe*. Major Fernandez was very civil, and protested there had been no intention to molest me, and promised that a similar occurrence should not happen again. He says there is nothing new from below. Silence only. The ironclads are a little



above Humaita, doing nothing to prevent the Paraguayans from crossing the river. What fools are the Brazilians!

"*Wednesday, March 4th.* — The weather continues oppressive, with nothing to break the monotony. The days seem very long, but, thank God! we are now all in good health."

Up to this time we had seen little to change our opinion that the allies would follow up their advantages and soon end the war. Why they had not done it before we could not explain. They had Lopez and his whole force at their mercy, if their commanders had possessed, not military genius, but common sense. They had an army five times as numerous as that of Lopez, and for months had him invested on every side except by the river. Thousands of men had been lying idle, absolutely dying for want of exercise, waiting for the squadron to force a passage above Humaita, and when that was effected it seemed that the last hope of Lopez would be gone.

It had been a mystery to us why these idle troops had not been put to work long before to cut a road through the Chaco to some point above Humaita. This matter had been discussed in the newspapers in Buenos Aires, but it had been declared to be impracticable, as the Chaco was but a dense forest full of marshes and swamps, intersected with deep and wide streams. It seemed to us, however, who, not being military men, were perhaps not competent to judge, that if the men who had died in the low grounds about the Tres Bocas within the past year had been set to work to make a corduroy road from Cerrito to Fort Olimpo, they could easily have done it, and one half of them been still alive.

Events of a suspicious character were going on around us. The silence that prevailed was ominous. The only two persons connected with the government with whom I ever conversed, Fernandez and Venancio Lopez, could never tell me anything. We heard of certain foreigners being arrested and sent below, but as they were not our acquaintances we had no suspicion of what offences they were accused. The twelve public-spirited patriots, with the President's brother-in-law, Saturnino Bedoya, at their head, who had gone to head-quar-



ters to bear the *voluntary* gifts of the diamond-hilted sword with gold scabbard, the patriotic addresses bound in volumes with golden covers, and other gifts into which the jewels of the poor women had been wrought, had not returned. The *Semanario*, in its account of their reception, said the President had received the sword and been deeply affected by this evidence of their devotion to their country's cause, and with that sword would lead them to victory or perish at their head. Few of the committee, however, were ever to return again to Asuncion. Bedoya was arrested for no cause that I could ever learn, except that the French Consul, Cuberville, had told Benigno, that, in case the President should abdicate, he would be the proper man for the succession. There may have been other reasons, but any one knowing Lopez would regard that as sufficient, and would not care to look further. A whispered possibility that there might be a change was high treason in Lopez's eyes; and though it was the consul who made it, yet it was enough to awaken the suspicion that the brother and brother-in-law were already providing for the succession. With this, as I believe, commenced the first idea of a conspiracy in Lopez's mind. A man, half knave, half fool, who had been but a short time in the country, made a suggestion innocent in itself, but coming to the ears of Lopez it was enough to inflame him to resolve on the destruction of every one who might profit by his fall.

At this time the government at Asuncion was to all appearance in the hands of Fernandez. Venancio was still there, but was too sick to do anything, and too frightened to venture on any act without orders. Sanabria, at Luque, was the only executive man there; and had there been any treachery meditated, it must have been at them or through them. Sanabria, however, was too universally detested to be suspected of being in the confidence of any one but his master, and all accused parties being seized by his orders, it seemed that those two were "among the faithless, faithful only found."

The Vice-President, Berges, and Benitez, were all called to head-quarters as soon as Lopez learned that they had taken



counsel together in regard to the defence of Asuncion after the passage of the ironclads, and Fernandez and Sanabria had been left only because their services were required to keep the people in subjection and order.

Both the Vice-President and Berges were held close prisoners at Paso Pucu as soon as they arrived there. Benitez was treated with more indulgence, as Lopez must show favor to some, in order to retain their services for a while longer, but they had undoubtedly all committed the same offence.

The non-return of the ironclads to effect the capture of Asuncion after their first inglorious exploit caused great uneasiness to all who had taken refuge in my house. They feared that in coming there they had incurred the displeasure of Lopez ; and had they supposed the end was so distant, they never would have taken so hazardous a step. Their disgust, therefore, grew daily more intense, as day after day passed and there was no indication that any effort was to be made to cut Lopez off from his supplies. This feeling was greatly increased when we learned that the Paraguayans were passing large numbers of cattle across to the Chaco, and thence driving them down the right bank of the river, and then passing them back into Humaita. For two years the impenetrable Chaco had kept the allies powerless on that side of the river, and yet no sooner did Lopez require a road there than he found it. The great inert mass of the allied army still sat idle, and the officers spent their time in celebrating the late great victory, by which they had got Lopez surrounded and so completely at their mercy that his capitulation was only a matter of a few days more or less. Marshal Caxias and Admiral Ignacio were too busy sending off the reports of victories and magnifying those services that were to bring them honors and promotion, to look after the prostrate enemy. The ironclads, having captured Asuncion, according to the reports of their gallant commanders, could attempt nothing more till they had orders from home. If they could keep their vessels from capture by the Paraguayans, they thought they were performing prodigies of valor. It would have been supposed they would



have moved up and down the river at those points where the cattle were carried over, and have prevented this at least, and also the escape of any considerable portion of the army of Lopez ; but they all rested, apparently in sluggish indifference to what Lopez might do.

As before mentioned, Humaita was left in command of Colonels Martinez and Alén. Of the former I have already spoken. Colonel Paulino Alén was a man in all respects superior to Martinez, was a man of tried courage, and had won the confidence of his chief by his fidelity as a spy. By the few foreigners about the camp he was regarded with the greatest aversion, as he was known to be ever trying to inspire Lopez with suspicion of them, and indeed of everybody else. He resembled Lopez in many particulars, being short and stout, with much Indian blood in him, and more of the Indian suspicion and ferocity of character. He had a better education than most Paraguayans, having been a member of Lopez's suite in Europe, and his secretary at the time of his mediation in Buenos Aires.

These two being left in command, Lopez withdrew and crossed over to the Chaco, and thence made his way to San Fernando. When assured of his safety, they destroyed his bomb-proof house, that this evidence of his cowardice should not fall into the hands of the allies. The large guns, such as could be dragged through the swamps of the Chaco, were withdrawn from their positions around Paso Pucu, and sent to San Fernando, and wooden dummies, or Quaker guns, left to keep the Brazilians in check, and all the forces left were concentrated within the inner lines of Humaita. The Brazilians as usual, however, kept up their bombardment for a long time after the place was abandoned except by a few whose business it was to light camp-fires in the deserted places.

At length, as no response was made for days, the assailants ventured nearer and nearer, till at last it was evident that they had been wasting their ammunition on empty forts and Quaker guns. Then, with characteristic valor, they entered just in time to see the few pickets escape to the inner



trenches. Another great victory was then to be celebrated. Steamers were once more to be despatched to the mouth of the river and to Rio, with the news that the brave Caxias had taken Paso Pucu, and Lopez had at last been so thoroughly routed he could never make a stand again. Humaita, however, still held out, and Lopez with the larger part of his army was fifty miles up the river, fortifying at San Fernando. He had also a considerable force strongly posted at a point called Timbo, a little above Humaita, on the right bank of the river. The allies had, however, after as many months as they should have been days, made a road through the Chaco, and cut off all communication between the two places, so that Martinez and Alén were completely surrounded. They managed to send through a courier to Lopez, advising him of their situation, and that their provisions were exhausted. He returned orders that they were to remain at their posts till six days after the supplies were all gone, and then, if no relief came, to cross over the river and cut their way through to his head-quarters. In this desperate situation Alén ventured an act of disobedience. Under the anxiety and hardships to which he had been exposed, his mind gave way, and he started for San Fernando, which, unfortunately for himself, he reached alive. He was received with such displeasure, that he instantly divined that the torture and death he had so often inflicted with alacrity on others would probably be his own doom. To escape such a fate he attempted suicide by blowing his brains out. But in this he was still more unfortunate, for he only succeeded in inflicting a ghastly, though not fatal, wound that destroyed one eye.

Martinez, supported by Captains Gill and Cabral, literally obeyed their instructions to remain in Humaita till the provisions should have been six days exhausted. Then they crossed over the river with the remnant of their forces. It is well to give here the account of this retreat as given by Lopez in his own *Semanario* of August 1, 1868:—

“Six days had passed since the commandants of Humaita had advised his Excellency that their provisions were entirely finished, but



as so unexpected an accident brought with it very serious difficulties in the matter of evacuating the post, the work — that is, the fortifications at San Fernando — went on. His Excellency, the wise and just appreciator of the singular qualities of the Paraguayan soldier, of his love of country, of his discipline, and his valor and constancy, ordered the troops and their commanders that they should eat nothing for six days, and that after that vigil they should effect the passage of the river on a given day. The commanders and the troops at Humaita did not eat, then, for six days, and after that they realized their happy passage with the most complete and admirable result.

“It is just that this heroic episode of the Paraguayan army should be noted, which, having no other example in the history of wars, comes to demonstrate the inestimable virtues of the Paraguayan soldier, and the influence that the more than magic voice, the divine voice, of Marshal Lopez exercises over them, at the same time it reveals to us and proclaims to the enemy and to the world of how much that soldier, guided by his Marshal, is capable.

“Admiration suspends its flight to detain itself over it as the point most signal to which it can ascend. And can the conquest and enslavement of a nation with such sons and such gifts be presumed? Only the barbarian can nourish it, but he may know and the world may know that it will never be possible. . . .

“Admiration and praise eternal to Marshal Lopez, that with his word only attains consummate and splendid victories over the barbarous enemy, and counts colossal pyramids of heroism. ‘Do not eat,’ he has said to the troops at Humaita, and they did not eat. ‘Pass,’ he said to them, and they passed, leaving the enemy completely nonplussed in their protracted plans of reducing it by hunger. O, this is superior to all praise, there are no words with which to make its due appreciation !”

Such were the praises of himself and of the valiant defenders of Humaita that he caused to be published in his *Semario*. His voice, more than magical, his divine voice, had inspired all ; and in proof that he was guided by a higher power, it was announced that the waters had abated at a difficult pass, as the waters of the Red Sea once retired for the Israelites to pass through, so that his devoted troops went out unharmed and in safety from their dangerous position.



## CHAPTER XIX.

Colonel Martinez accused of Treason. — His Wife arrested and tortured. — Her sufferings and Execution. — Extract from a Despatch sent to Washington. — Difficulty of Transmitting Correspondence. — Fresh Despatches by Flag of Truce. — Signs of an Impending Crisis.

IN a little time the praises bestowed so lavishly on the defenders of Humaita ceased. They had been ordered, not only to retire, but to fight their way back to the new lines of Lopez, and whoever did not do that knew full well he would be denounced as a traitor, and his family subjected to indescribable indignities and suffering. When, therefore, they found themselves in the Chaco, they made most desperate efforts to cut their way through to Lopez's head-quarters, and thus prove that they were not traitors. But their sufferings had told upon them till they had scarcely strength enough to walk, and on all sides they were confronted by three times their number. The only roads or trails were held in force by the allies, and they had only their side-arms and muskets to oppose to them. Had they been in their full health and strength, doubtless many of them would have crawled by night through the swamps and thickets, and so escaped. But in the state in which they were, they had not the strength, if they fell into a marsh, to drag themselves out. There was no possibility, apparently, that one of them could ever reach the lines of Lopez alive. They must either surrender or die. If they surrendered they would be denounced as traitors, for it was a part of the policy of Lopez that no one under any circumstances should accept quarter, and while his men had health and strength very few cared to bring the misery on their friends that such an act was sure to entail. But these



men were past hope and past resistance. Martinez was too weak to speak aloud, and his men were mere walking skeletons, falling one after another from exhaustion, never to rise again. Who will excuse Martinez? Who will excuse Gill for surrendering? It is not for me to do it. Knowing as they did the character of Lopez, they should have died in their tracks. What came of their surrender?

At the time I was in Asuncion, I had heard of the heroic defence of Humaita, and I had heard of its successful evacuation. The bells had been rung and people about the new capital had been commanded to rejoice over the great victory achieved by Martinez and his gallant men. But now came another report. It was in the winter-time, and a cold storm had been prevailing for a day or two. Some one told me with bated breath, that, the night before, two soldiers had gone to Madam Lynch's house at Patiño-cué and seized the wife of Martinez and bid her march to the capital. The distance was eight leagues, and the soldiers with frequent blows of their sabres drove her over the rough ground to Asuncion. Of course she could have no idea what offence she had committed, but she knew well the character of Lopez and that of the treacherous she-dragon with whom she had lived for months past. She had seen many others, apparently high in the favor of this abandoned harridan, sent with her approval to prison and chains; and that the same fortune had fallen to herself could not have been so surprising as if she had dwelt among people having the feelings of ordinary humanity. The poor woman was driven through the mud and over the rough roads without rest or relief till she came to the town. Her light shoes soon gave out, and her feet were cut, bruised, bleeding, and torn long ere her walk was over. Arrived at the landing-place of the capital, she was taken into a room of the arsenal and loaded with heavy iron fetters, and left for a few hours to meditate on the mutability of human affairs. She was then driven on board of a steamer and taken to head-quarters, where she was subjected to every torture that Lopez and her bosom friend, Madam Lynch, could devise. With that mock-



ery of the forms of justice that Lopez pretended so scrupulously to observe, she was brought before his tribunal of priests and torturers, and questioned in regard to the treachery of her husband. As she had not seen him for months, she could have known nothing of his recent acts, and probably was not even aware at that time of his having surrendered.

Lopez believed, or pretended to believe, that a conspiracy had been in progress for a long time, and the fact that Martinez had surrendered rather than die of starvation was proof that he was one of the conspirators, and his wife was ordered to confess that it was so, and give all the particulars of the plan and the names of the parties to it. But the poor woman knew nothing, and could not confess. She had only known her husband as one who had served his master too faithfully and carried out his orders with horrible fidelity. She was then flogged with sticks, and the flesh literally cut from her shoulders and back, and in this way encouraged to confess. What could she tell? She knew nothing. Then the *cepo uruguayana* was applied, which was never known to fail in bringing out any confession that was asked. Bliss, Taylor, Saguier, Masterman, all admit that the agony of this torture was such that they would promise to tell anything required. Their greatest difficulty was to know what to confess. They knew nothing, and yet must admit they knew much, and their stories must be such as agreed with the confessions of others. Their time of confession came long after that of poor Mrs. Martinez, and when the conspiracy story had taken such form and consistency that the inquisitors knew what they were expected to extort, and had learned how to put their questions so as to imply what answers were required. But she had nothing to guide her, and could only protest that she knew nothing.

The mother of Martinez was also brought to head-quarters and subjected to similar treatment, and afterwards executed at the same time with her son's wife. Lopez knew well enough that neither had anything to tell, but he wished to make an example of them, that his other most trusted officers might see what was in store for their wives, mothers,



and sisters in case they should ever fall into the hands of the enemy. Other indignities not to be described, and the nature of which cannot even be hinted at, were also inflicted on this favorite and friend of Madam Lynch, as if to warn them of the fate in store for their own wives and sisters should they ever come short of obedience to the orders of Lopez. They might learn from the fate of Martinez's wife and mother that they must fight until they died or were killed, or all they loved would suffer the same cruel fate.

It was a part of the policy of Lopez to husband his materials for torture. If they died under the infliction it greatly enraged him, and his inquisitors kept him well informed of the condition of the tortured. The pain and agony of others had become his principal delight ; when a victim escaped him through the gate of death, he felt it as a wrong to himself, and that he had been robbed of a source of pleasure.

The inquisitors and torturers therefore knew that they were to graduate the sufferings of the wife and mother of Martinez, so they should not die. On one day the flogging would be applied until its continuance would endanger life, and as soon as the wounds were slightly healed, the *cepo uruguayana* was repeated, until death should threaten to snatch them away, when they were left to recover sufficiently to bear a repetition of these horrid practices. The effect of the *cepo uruguayana* was such that persons subjected to it remained in a state of semi-consciousness for several days afterwards. Yet the wife of Martinez was kept alive long enough to undergo it at six different times, between whiles being flogged till her whole body was a livid mass !

Yet Lopez would not let her die. She was still kept alive ; and when, more than six months after her arrest, he saw that the dangers were thickening around him so fast that those whom he had so long held near his head-quarters to be tortured for his special delectation might escape through the chances of war, he took measures to prevent such a catastrophe by ordering her and many others to be shot.

Of the tragical events transpiring at head-quarters we at



Asuncion knew very little. We would learn from time to time of the disappearance of different people, but of their fate we could judge nothing, except from what we knew of the disposition of Lopez, and this led us to fear the worst that malignity, human or diabolical, could invent. Our forebodings, alas! as we afterwards learned, all proved true.

The long delay of the ironclads in returning to take possession of Asuncion after it had been evacuated, had caused us all the greatest uneasiness. There was no reason, so far as we could see, why it should not have been taken at any time, as we knew there were no forces there to prevent it. The strong measures taken by Lopez in driving people into the interior indicated that he would make good his threat of a year and a half before, that, if he should be forced at last to succumb, it should not be until the last Paraguayan was destroyed. Many acts of great cruelty and hardship had come to my knowledge, and I was fully convinced that Lopez was greatly displeased that I had given shelter to so many people in my Legation. The incident of Manlove's arrest and detention showed that I would be molested in any way that he might think it prudent to venture upon, and it was clear that if he were to be driven back to the interior before Asuncion was taken, he would not allow those persons in my house not belonging to the Legation to be left behind, and it was very doubtful whether he would allow me to remain. In fact, I did not believe he would, and was anticipating a dispute with him on that point, of which it was easy to foresee the issue when the might was in hands that paid no regard to the right.

In my despatch of January 13, the last I had sent to Washington, and which I had intrusted to Lopez to send through the lines, I had advised Mr. Seward of the dangers that seemed to be gathering about us, and requested my recall. But as I was well aware that all the foreigners there regarded the presence of the minister of some strong power as a protection to themselves, not only against Lopez, but against the allies, should they ever take the town, I expressed the opinion that a successor should be sent to take my place. Having



twice before asked for my recall, and my request not having been granted, on the ground that I had made my resignation conditional, and not absolute, I now wrote to the Secretary of State as follows: "You remark that the President desires that I should remain here, but say that if my resignation should be made absolute it would be accepted. From the preceding statement of the circumstances in which I am situated, I think I shall appear justified in making my resignation thus absolute; but though it be absolute and unconditional, I trust that with my recall may come a successor. I know that my presence as United States Minister, and the only minister of a neutral power here, gives a great sense of security to many people, and especially to all foreigners. My departure before the arrival of a successor would also, I am persuaded, be regarded with great regret by this government. At the same time, I think that at this crisis, when important political changes seem impending in this part of the world, this Legation should be continued; but I do not want this to be taken as a condition of my resignation. On the contrary, I now ask my recall unconditionally, and with this make my resignation absolute."

This despatch I delivered to Berges on the 17th of January, and supposed that in the ordinary course of events I should receive my recall in May or June. But I began to have doubts lest Lopez should have detained it. I had learned that I had previously given him mortal offence in my note to Berges, expressing regret at the reported death of President Mitre, and these despatches had been sent but a few days after that indiscretion. The engineer Valpy, who had returned from head-quarters, had informed me that Lopez was greatly enraged that I had spoken well of Mitre, and said that it was several days after my despatches were received before any flag of truce was sent to the front. I was therefore persuaded that if they had been sent they had first been opened and read; for I had already learned that Lopez knew and practised the art of opening and closing sealed packages in a manner so artistic as to defy detection.



Unfortunately, I had little more faith in the honor of the allies than I had in that of Lopez. I had experienced so much incivility and bad faith from them, that I considered it highly problematical whether or not my despatches would be forwarded, even if Lopez sent them to be delivered into their hands. But our condition was getting so disagreeable and desperate at Asuncion, that I resolved on another effort to make it known. I knew that if I evinced any discontent or uneasiness, Lopez would suspect that I wanted to get away, and would open my despatches, and, if they contained anything displeasing to him, would detain them. That would render my situation worse than before, for he considered it an unpardonable offence for any one to entertain the thought that he would not come triumphant out of the war; and if I were to express a desire to get away, he would regard it as proof that I considered his cause lost, or at least doubtful. This despatch was dated the 7th of April, or seven weeks after the evacuation of the capital, and with it I enclosed copies of the correspondence in the Manlove difficulty, thinking that he could not complain of that, even though it should reveal a strange situation for a minister to be in; and in my synopsis of its contents I remarked that, in my opinion, the government of Paraguay had shown great disregard of the courtesies due to my Legation, if not a direct violation of its rights. I also complained of the neglect of our government in not keeping the way open so that I could communicate with it, though taking care to lay the blame mainly on the allies for detaining my correspondence. In fact, my official correspondence was carefully worded, so that if it were opened and read it would not give offence, and would be resealed and sent forward. In a private letter, however, to a friend, who was supposed at that time to have considerable influence, I stated more freely my apprehensions; and though I did not enter into an account of our situation, I complained of being so neglected by the government, and said that if it did not manifest more interest in us, a very grave responsibility would, before long, rest upon somebody. Whether or



not my friend should understand that unless a gunboat should come to our rescue soon we should never get away alive, I was sure he would hasten to Washington and represent our situation to the head of the State Department, and induce him to rouse up the Rip Van Winkle of the navy, and persuade him to order a gunboat to our relief.

Besides my own correspondence, I enclosed a few letters for other parties, being, as I thought, very careful not to send anything of a political character or to which either of the belligerents would object. Among these was an open letter from Don Domingo Parodi, relating only to a small matter of business. I also sent a letter from Dr. Carreras to his brother. He assured me it contained nothing except a notice to his family that he was in good health ; and as he participated with me in the apprehension that everything would be scrutinized by Lopez, he was sure to write nothing that was not favorable to him and hostile to the allies. His only fear regarding anything he might write was that it should be suspected by the Brazilians, if it were addressed to any of his own family. He therefore sent it under cover to a friend of his and mine, Mr. John F. Gowland of Buenos Aires. Strictly speaking, I had, perhaps, no right to send any letters but my own ; but as I knew they contained nothing of a political character, I enclosed them in my package of despatches, which I sent to head-quarters with a request that they might be forwarded through the military lines. A few days after I was notified that they had been sent through as requested, and thought no more about them till long afterwards. I then learned that they never went beyond the camp of Lopez.



## CHAPTER XX.

Petty Annoyances become Frequent. — Our Fears of Impending Troubles. — Political Views of Dr. Carreras. — Brilliant Qualities and Attainments of Rodriguez. — Hope entertained by Natives and Foreigners of Protection under the American Flag. — The Mother and Sisters of Lopez share this Hope. — Letters received by an American Gunboat addressed to Carreras and Vasconcellos. — Their Contents. — News of the Assassination of Flores. — Another Visit to Lopez's Head-Quarters. — Dr. Carreras becomes Heir to a Fortune in Bolivia. — Lopez refuses him Permission to leave the Country. — Altered Aspect of Affairs at Head-Quarters. — Frigidity of Lopez. — Conversations with Drs. Stewart and Fox. — Bedoya and Benigno Lopez are Prisoners. — A Card-Party given by Madam Lynch. — Her Duplicity. — Return to Asuncion.

THE continuance of the war for so long a time after the town had been evacuated caused great anxiety to the people who had taken up their residence in my house in the hope that they would need its protection but for a few days. Though they had fled to it for protection against the Brazilians, they began to fear lest they had made a mistake. The strange inaction of the allies was the principal topic of our daily discourse. If they delayed too long, all realized that these annoyances would increase till they would be unbearable, and the English and Orientales feared lest they should become so offensive that I should be driven to demand my passports and leave the country. They would then all fall into Lopez's power, when he would doubtless take a terrible revenge on them for daring to suspect that he could not and would not defend and protect them. It was now clear that I could be of no service except to those who were in my house, and but for them I should have resented several annoyances, especially the arrest of Manlove, and, if they were not discontinued and satisfaction given, should have demanded my passports peremptorily and closed all official relations.



I was extremely averse to taking any step that would expose Rodriguez and Carreras. They were, both of them, most agreeable and intelligent gentlemen, though Carreras was a violent partisan, and had some of the most obnoxious characteristics of the Spanish American politician. I had a great many sharp discussions with him on political affairs and the character of South American notabilities. In common with Lopez he had a great dislike of President Mitre, and, personally, I had little reason for differing with them. But the animosities of South American politicians are so intense that it is considered impossible for an opponent to have any merit; and as I often defended Mitre for his courage, his eloquence, his literary accomplishments, and his courteous deportment, I found, long afterwards, that every word I had said in his favor had been treasured up to be quoted to my prejudice. Rodriguez, however, though strongly partisan, was, without exception, the most earnest, intelligent, sincere, and agreeable man that I ever met in all my experience in South America. He had the brightest intellect, the highest tone of integrity and honor, and in my whole life I have never encountered in any country a person to whom, in the same length of time, I became so strongly attached. He was a man of whom I often thought, that, if he should ever escape alive from Paraguay, he would be a prominent figure in the history of the regions of the Plata. True, in many respects we differed politically. He was possessed of the idea which is so common in South American countries, that liberty and independence are one and the same thing, and in all his acts he seemed to feel that the independence of the Banda Oriental was the first object to be considered by the public men of that Republic. Questions affecting the policy or measures necessary to the development and progress of the country were all to be subordinated to the idea of independence, which he carried to such an extreme that he had an almost idolatrous reverence and regard for the memory of that great cut-throat and assassin, Artigas. He it was of whom I have before spoken as having obtained a brick from the



house in which Artigas lived in Paraguay to carry to Montevideo as a relic, to be preserved as of especial interest to his countrymen. Yet he had the ability and the sincerity of character to have made him an eminent man, and his experience in Paraguay was such as to modify his views very much as to the advantages of independence without liberty. Paraguay had been independent for more than fifty years, and he was compelled to admit that so little liberty was never possessed by any people on the face of the earth. I felt, therefore, that it would be cowardly and wicked for me to take any steps that would prejudice the situation both of Rodriguez and Carreras; that I ought to remain at any sacrifice personal to myself, short of exposing and subjecting others who had stronger obligations upon me to danger of their lives. In addition to these two, there were several others who felt that their safety depended very much upon my remaining in Paraguay. This was the case with Bliss and Masterman, and all the foreigners in the country felt that the presence of the minister of a strong foreign power would be a security for them. It was the same with many Paraguayans, — in fact, with all of the better class with whom I had any acquaintance. The mother of the President repeatedly spoke to me of that fact. She and her younger daughter, who lived near the capital at that time, and whom I often visited, seemed to think that I might be disposed to go away from the country, and they often expressed to me their hopes that I should remain until the end of the war. They said that if the enemy were to come, I and my house would be the only place secure from sack, and they intimated to me that there were other dangers which they dreaded more than they did the allies. I told them all that I should remain as long as I could be of any service; that in the trying circumstances in which they were, I would not abandon them; that I would do all that I could to give them shelter and protection, if worse times should befall us than we then experienced.

It was under this general aspect of affairs, that, on the morning of the 6th of May, I was gratified to receive a visit



from young Gaspar Lopez, a clerk in the Office of Foreign Affairs, who brought me a despatch from Captain Kirkland, commander of the Wasp, and also a small package of letters addressed to Don Antonio Vasconcellos, the Portuguese Vice-Consul. The letter of Captain Kirkland I immediately opened and read. In it he stated that he had come by order of our government to take me and my family away, provided I wished to go ; that he was below the blockading squadron of the Brazilians, and was not permitted to go any higher, and that he should wait there to hear from me. Young Gaspar was very anxious to hear the news which I had received, that he might, as I supposed, communicate it to his government. I told him that the letter from Captain Kirkland was only a brief note, informing me of his arrival and that he had come to take me away ; but as for news, political or otherwise, beyond the limits of Paraguay, there was not a word, and I had no letters from other sources. Gaspar returned to the new capital of Luque immediately, and in the afternoon, as I had received no news from below, with the letter from Captain Kirkland I went to the house of Vasconcellos, a distance of about a league and a half from the capital, to carry his letter, and ascertain what news it might contain. On reaching his house I took a seat in the corridor, and delivered the package. This package had on the margin the name of G. Z. Gould, the English Secretary of Legation in Buenos Aires. Vasconcellos took it into his house, and directly returned with several letters, which he had hastily glanced over, and read their contents to me and to the Consul of Portugal, Leite Pereira. These letters were written by parties bitterly opposed to the war against Paraguay, and gave exulting accounts of the difficulties existing in Montevideo. They gave several particulars of the assassination of President Flores, and were extravagant in praise of Lopez and his cause, and the valor of the Paraguayans, and gave words of encouragement to hold out a little longer, for that the alliance could not long continue, and if Lopez could still hold his own for a few weeks or months he would come out triumphant.



Vasconcellos told me also that his package contained two or three other letters, one of which was for Don Antonio Tomé, and the other was for my guest, Carreras. That letter he gave to me to take in and deliver. It was a very small letter, contained in a thin, light, and very small envelope. Returning to my house, I delivered it to Carreras, and on opening it he found that the envelope contained two letters. One of them he read to me, and its contents were in all respects similar to the letters which Vasconcellos had received, giving the political condition of affairs at the mouth of the river. The other was a brief letter from his brother Edward, in which he wrote that an uncle of theirs had recently died in the town of Corocoro, in Bolivia, that he had left a large fortune and no lineal heirs, and that their family would inherit the estate, and advising him to get permission from Lopez to go through to Bolivia and look after the estate and interests of the family, stating that no time was to be lost, as according to the laws of Bolivia the heirs of deceased foreigners must present their claims within one year after their decease.

The next day I saw Colonel Fernandez, and advised him of the arrival of the Wasp, and that she had come to take me and my family away; that I did not wish to leave, but would send away my family, provided the steamer would come up the river far enough, so that they could conveniently embark; and that I thought it would be well for me to go to San Fernando to make the necessary arrangements for sending through my despatches, and for making any other arrangements which might be required in case the Wasp should come above the blockade. I received no answer from him nor from anybody during that day, nor the next, which was a bad indication as to the temper and disposition of the President towards me.

On the third day I called at the house of the Lady President, or Lopez's mother. I told her and her daughter Rafaela that it was very likely I should soon go to the head-quarters, as a United States steamer had come to take me away. They



expressed the greatest concern lest I should go, as the old lady said very decidedly that I was the only person in Paraguay having any security whatever. She begged me, if I went below, to ascertain as much as possible in regard to her son Benigno and her son-in-law Saturnino Bedoya. She said she had heard they were both prisoners, but could not learn any of the particulars. Her son Venancio, who was still living near the capital, was not allowed to visit her; nobody was allowed to visit her. The peons and the poor people around her all kept away, and she could not learn as much of what was going on as the most abject and miserable person in the neighborhood. But her great distress and anxiety seemed to be in regard to her son Benigno. She showed great emotion, and implored me to bring her some tidings from him. I told her I would do the best that I could. She was profuse in her thanks, and offered to send to me certain articles very necessary to the comfort of my family, such as sugar, tea, coffee, chickens, and milch cows. The next day I received an answer to my letter to Benitez, in which he said that the President would be pleased to receive a visit from me at his head-quarters, and that he would give me a steamer to go down to that place. It was not until the 12th, however, that I was informed the steamer was about to start. Carreras requested me to inform Lopez of his situation, of the fact that his uncle had died in Corocoro, leaving him a large fortune, and that he was very anxious to get permission to go through to Bolivia; that he was still, as he ever had been, a decided enemy of the Brazilians, and if he could go to Bolivia, Peru, and Chili, he should make it his business to enlist the governments and people of those countries in behalf of Paraguay and against the allies; that, if it were not convenient that he should go through by land to Bolivia, he would be glad to take passage on the Wasp, on her return to Montevideo, and would make any stipulation, if desired, not to make a landing at any place in the river; and that he would embark on some steamer that might touch at Montevideo on her way to Chili, and would do nothing that could



possibly compromise or injure the cause of Lopez, but everything that might lay in his power to assist it.

I left Asuncion on the 12th of May for San Fernando, and reached the landing-place on the succeeding day at about three o'clock. I was there provided with a horse and escort to take me to the head-quarters, some four miles from the bank of the river, and to get there I was obliged to pass over a road in some places extremely difficult. I reached the head-quarters a little before sunset. I was taken to a straw house, which was one of several of a similar character, and which I was told had been until the day before occupied by General Bruguez, but I saw no acquaintances, and nobody came near me. A servant, the same whom I had had on other occasions to wait upon me, was assigned to me; and he told me that the President and his staff, and Madam Lynch, and others whom I supposed to be still in favor, had gone on an excursion in a steamer. He, however, brought me some supper, and as the night was very cold, and I had nobody to converse with, I went to bed about nine o'clock. Soon after, I judged from the sound that the President had returned, and about ten o'clock I received notice that if I desired to see him that evening he would see me. I sent word that I would postpone my visit till the next day. In the morning I got up, and, looking about, was surprised that all of my old English friends, who were accustomed to visit me with great familiarity and frequency, kept away. Nobody came near that I could talk to. The old Vice-President had a room next to mine. I got sight of him, but he looked forlorn and woe-begone, and turned away, as if afraid to be seen recognizing me. I requested my servant to go and tell Colonel Thompson that I wished to see him. He came, and in reply to my questions regarding recent events he was very reticent, and gave me to understand that the less he said the better it might be for him, for if it were ascertained that I had derived any contraband information, Lopez would trace it to its source. There was a sort of tacit understanding among all the foreigners, and I fully appre-



ciated the delicate position of Colonel Thompson, and was well aware that his representations of the impregnable situation in which Lopez then was had been made with the apprehension that inadvertently I might express an opinion that he was not so strong as he wished to have it supposed. But his call was very brief, and an hour or two later I was informed that the President would see me at his house. I went immediately, and was received with a formality such as, with one exception, I had never observed in any previous interview. I commenced conversation with him upon the business that had brought me to his head-quarters, and stated my wishes that, as the government had sent a boat to take me away, I wished to avail myself of its presence to send off my family, but that for myself I preferred to remain to the end of the war ; that I wished to communicate with Captain Kirkland, and urge upon him that he should come above the blockade. The conversation gradually became more free, and he expressed his opinion that the boat ought to come above the blockade, that the allies had no right to stop her, and said he would give me every facility for communicating with the commander of the vessel. I said then that I would write to Captain Kirkland that I wished to embark my family at Asuncion, or as near there as possible, and he could send the letter through with a flag of truce.

The preliminaries of these arrangements were all made satisfactorily to me, and then I proceeded to speak about the request of Carreras. I told him that he had received a letter from his family advising him of the death of his uncle in Bolivia, and was very anxious to leave the country. I stated to him, moreover, what Carreras said in regard to his feelings towards the Brazilians, and of his disposition to aid the cause of Paraguay in Bolivia, Peru, or Chili, could he pass over to those countries. I observed, as I began to talk in this way, that the countenance of Lopez changed, and that there was a great deal of suppressed anger working behind those eyes, that were assuming a fiendish character. I saw at once that I could hope for nothing in behalf of Carreras, and I dis-



continued the conversation for him to reply, but he said very little. He asked, however, why Carreras had gone to my house. I told him that being aware that he was extremely obnoxious to the Brazilians, and not knowing but when the ironclads went to Asuncion they would capture the town, and fearing that if they did they would do to him as they formerly did to Leandro Gomez, he sought shelter from them. He asked why he continued in my house after the ironclads had gone away, and there was no further danger. I replied that he and Rodriguez came there as guests; that we had become well acquainted, and I had found them agreeable, intelligent gentlemen, and as we had no society since the evacuation of the town, we desired to have them remain for company and companionship; that I personally wished them to remain. He said that was a very good reason so far as I was concerned, but he evidently felt a great animosity towards Carreras. I took my leave of him, and prepared my letter to Captain Kirkland. After this I had another interview, when Lopez made some suggestions regarding the signals that Captain Kirkland would do well to use coming up the river. I therefore wrote a second letter to Kirkland. He sent me, late in the evening of the following day, the orders which he had written for the commandants at Humaita and Timbo, and I stayed another night at his camp, as I could not deliver my letters for Kirkland until the next morning. I then went to see him again. During that interview I talked with him about the case of Manlove, and stated my views in regard to his arrest. He then spoke about my right of keeping so many people in my house who did not belong to the Legation, and intimated that he might officially call it in question, and that if I persisted in it a diplomatic correspondence would follow. I told him that the English had come there by permission of the government; that to the presence of Carreras and Rodriguez no objection had been made for months, though the government was aware of it; and that, as circumstances then were, I was not disposed to send any of them away. But as to Manlove he gave no encourage-



ment that he would be set at liberty. I then told him that as it would be several days before any answer could be received from Captain Kirkland, I wished to return to Asuncion as soon as possible. He said that the steamer would leave that afternoon as soon as I desired,—in form, if not in manner, fully complying with all that etiquette or diplomatic courtesy could expect or require.

Finding that the English who were in the camp were afraid to come near me, I went to see them. I went several times to the house of Dr. Stewart, and there I met not only him, but Dr. Fox. They both expressed their desire to call upon me, but they knew that it would be at the peril of their lives to do it, whereas, as I had called upon them, they could excuse themselves by saying that they had not invited me, but they did not wish to be rude to me and send me away. In fact, they were very anxious to see and converse with me. On one of these visits Dr. Stewart told me that the English government was moving in behalf of the English subjects in Paraguay; that he did not know much about it, but he was persuaded her Majesty's government had made a peremptory demand for all the English in the country, and that it would not be put off by any assurances from them that they were contented, and did not wish to leave, nor would it be satisfied by letters written by them while in the power of Lopez. They must be delivered; then, if they wished to return, it would be a matter of their own choice. I also saw Madam Lynch on several occasions. She, as usual, was all suavity, and abounding in expressions of interest in and kindness towards everybody, even those whom she had instigated Lopez to arrest and torture. I had inquired of Dr. Stewart as to the condition and situation of Don Benigno and Bedoya. He told me that they were both prisoners; that Bedoya was a close prisoner, and was being badly treated; that Benigno was a prisoner in a shanty near by, but further than that he knew nothing. The information from Dr. Stewart I could not convey to the President's mother, as she would probably intercede in behalf of Benigno and Bedoya if she knew their situation; and if in-



quired of from whom she obtained her information, she would doubtless give my name. Then, as I had been able to communicate only with Stewart, Fox, and Thompson, the information would be traced to them, and the offending party must suffer. I therefore asked Madam Lynch in regard to them. I was obliged, however, to observe great circumspection, and I remarked, as if casually, that I did not see several of my old friends, two or three of whom I was expecting to see, for instance, José Berges, Don Benigno, and Bedoya, and I asked her how they all were. She said that Berges was quite feeble, that Benigno and Bedoya were very well. This information derived from her I could communicate to the old lady, and compromise nobody. The more particular information derived from Dr. Stewart I could not impart to her without its being traced back to him, the result of which would very likely have been his imprisonment, and perhaps his execution.

Dr. Stewart also informed me that the Vice-President had been a prisoner, but was then at large ; that both he and Don José Berges had suffered extremely in coming from Humaita to San Fernando ; that Berges had come so near dying on the road, he at one time was left alone to expire under a tree, but afterwards he was got through to San Fernando, and there detained as a prisoner. The Vice-President at that time was so far liberated that he was allowed to go out of his house and visit the President. I saw the poor man several times, and a more pitiable object it is hard to imagine. A man more than eighty years old, with little more flesh on his bones than a skeleton, with only a thin old cloak about him, though the weather, for that country, was extremely cold ; he looked as though he had not blood enough in his veins to keep life within his body. I observed him standing about, with a most obsequious, forlorn look, apparently anxious to catch the President's eye, and by his extreme deference and attention to merit his forgiveness for some act of which he probably knew not the criminality.

The last evening I was there I was invited by Madam Lynch to her house, or to the President's house, as apparently



they lived in the same mud building, to play whist. I complied with the invitation, and the whist-party was made up of Madam Lynch, the Hungarian Colonel Wisner, Colonel Thompson, and myself. Colonel Thompson, however, soon gave up his place to General Bruguez, who came in after the game had commenced. Strange as it may seem, all of that party escaped alive from the hands of Lopez except General Bruguez, who was shot subsequently as a traitor. This Bruguez, I may here say, was probably the best fighting officer that Lopez ever had, with one or two exceptions. He was a man noted for his cruelty and for his fidelity to his master, and had exposed himself with a recklessness and a valor which were extremely rare even among Paraguayans, who usually think nothing of danger. His services to his master had been of such a character that it was supposed his only hope of escape from destruction was in the final triumph of Lopez, as he had been the instrument of so many cruelties, that, if taken prisoner, he could never expect anything less than immediate death. And yet Lopez observed towards him that impartiality which was so remarkable in his character. He was subjected to the same horrid tortures and experienced the same terrible death as though he had been of great injury, instead of service, to his chief.

Leaving the court of Lopez on the 16th of May, I returned to the bank of the river and embarked for Asuncion. I observed a large quantity of rubbish, consisting mainly of dried hides for holding corn, on the deck between the after cabin and the fore part of the steamer, as if thrown there carelessly for the sole purpose of carrying it to Asuncion. I learned, however, from one of the engineers of the boat, an Englishman, that there was a large number of wounded in the fore part of the vessel, and that these hides had been thrown in the way to prevent me from going forward and learning of their presence, as every effort was made on all occasions to prevent people from knowing that any disaster had occurred in battle, or any persons been wounded.

I went immediately, on my return, to call upon the Presi-



dent's mother and sister at the Trinidad. They were extremely desirous of seeing me, as they supposed that I could give them some information, the one in regard to the situation of her son and son-in-law, and the other of her brother and husband. I could only communicate to them what Madam Lynch had told me, that they were very well in health. I knew they were prisoners, for Dr. Stewart had told me so ; but had I told the old lady that fact, the authority for it would have been traced to Dr. Stewart. Therefore I could say nothing more than that I believed they were still in health. As to their being prisoners in irons and badly treated I could give them no information. Perhaps I was not frank ; perhaps I denied having knowledge which I really possessed ; but if I erred lest I should subject others to suspicion, torture, and death by telling all I knew, I can only hope that my prevarication may have been blotted out after the manner of Uncle Toby's oath.



## CHAPTER XXI.

Correspondence with Commander Kirkland. — Numerous Arrests. — Victories reported in the *Semanario*. — Difficulty of obtaining Provisions. — A Period of Anxiety. — Our English Guests. — Arrest of Captain Fidanza and of many Foreigners. — The Portuguese Consul, Leite Pereira. — His *Exequatur* is withdrawn. — He takes Refuge in the American Legation. — Consultations on his Case. — His Surrender is demanded and refused. — Note to Benitez.

IT was not until the 30th of May, more than two weeks after I had sent my letter, that I received an answer to it from Captain Kirkland. This delay had caused us considerable uneasiness, as had the proper facilities been granted for making communication I should have received an answer within five days. In his letter, Captain Kirkland stated that the Marques de Caxias would not permit the Wasp to pass above the blockade, but offered, if I and my family would come to his lines at Pilar and Tayi in a Paraguayan steamer, to provide us with the means of going by land from either of those places to a point below the blockade, whence we could embark on board the Wasp. To our great surprise and disappointment, Kirkland sent us neither letter nor newspaper, nor any news whatever from the outer world, though he must have known that we had been many months, as it were, in prison, and without means of communicating with any one beyond the limits of Paraguay. I immediately answered the letter, declining the offer of the Marques de Caxias, stating that he had no right to detain the Wasp or prevent her from coming through the blockade. I also said that the state of Mrs. Washburn's health was such that she could not and would not attempt to go by land from Pilar and Tayi to the point indicated by him. I did not tell Kirkland that it was my intention to remain, and only to send my family. I distrusted his



motives and his judgment, and feared that if I stated anything of that kind he would consider that he had complied with his orders, and return to Montevideo. I told him by all means not to return, but to come through if possible. I told him, also, that if the Marques de Caxias persisted in refusing him permission to pass the blockade, he should attempt it without any permission; that the question of the right of a government to communicate with its minister by means of its naval vessels had been settled already in the case of the Shamokin at the time of my coming to Paraguay; and that he should give notice to Caxias, if permission was still refused, that he was going through without it; and that, should he start to pass through the blockade, I did not believe he would be forcibly stopped. If he were, and the Brazilians fired upon his vessel, then he could turn back, and not expose the vessel to be sunk or destroyed, but that I did not believe they would venture to fire upon her, and it was a matter of great importance that she should come through. I could not write to him of our real situation, or tell him that our lives were in danger, and that Lopez had entered upon a course that promised extermination of all the foreigners in his dominions, for my letter was to pass through the hands of Lopez, and would most likely be read by him before it reached Captain Kirkland. I, however, urged him very strongly not to go below, but to remain within call if possible. I told him they had no right to prevent his passing the blockade, and would not dare to fire upon him, and advised him to disregard their protests and come through. I knew our danger, and I knew that if he went away, and the fate that seemed to be impending should overtake us, and it should appear that by his leaving the river the evils that Lopez was preparing for us should overtake us, he would be held to a very grave responsibility. My object was to get the steamer above the blockade, and get my family on board of her first, and then to force Lopez to make certain explanations, and give certain satisfaction, with security for the future, or else to leave myself. I believed that, with a gunboat at hand, I could secure any explanations



that I demanded, and that I could forward such representations to the admiral of the squadron (who, I had learned, was not Godon) that I should not be left again for any considerable time without the means of communicating with him or the government. I had told Lopez that it was not my intention to go away until the war was over, though I had said nothing of my intention to go provided there was not a full and complete understanding as to what my relations were to be if I remained. I knew very well that if I should then tell Lopez that I and my family were all going away, he would not send my letters to the commander of the gunboat. I knew that he would refuse a steamer to carry us below, and it would not have been possible for us to get away without it. I was therefore obliged to use diplomacy in order to get the Wasp within hailing distance. He was anxious that the blockade should be forced, but he was more anxious that the only minister in the country should not appear to abandon him.

After having despatched this letter, the time passed as usual, with nothing to vary the monotony of our existence except the accounts which came to us nearly every day of persons arrested and sent in irons to head-quarters. We also heard various reports of the movements of the army ; at one time that the ironclads were near San Fernando, and that a large body of troops was approaching that point by land. The *Semanario* invariably contained accounts of battles, all of which resulted in great victories for the Paraguayans. Scarcely a number of the paper appeared without containing accounts of actions in which one or two hundred Paraguayans were engaged with three or four thousand or more of the enemy, the result of which always was that, after performing prodigies of valor, each man slaying his dozens, they retired in good order, after the enemy had retreated, leaving thousands of dead and wounded on the field of combat, and with a loss to themselves of not usually more than two or three killed and twenty or thirty wounded. The impression among the English and other foreigners seemed to be that the allies were



approaching by land and water, and that the war could last but very little longer.

It was on the 3d of June that I sent my last letter to Captain Kirkland, advising him that my family could not go away on the *Wasp* unless she were to come above the blockading squadron. On the 23d I received his reply, in which he stated that the Marques de Caxias positively refused permission for him to pass the blockade, and that, after waiting for nearly two months, he should return to Montevideo for further instructions, not doubting he should return immediately with orders to pass the allied fleet. But as we knew not where the admiral was, or if he was of a similar character to his predecessor, it was uncertain whether the gunboat would return in one month, or three, or six.

During this time I was occupied very much in foraging for my large family. Having more than forty persons in my house, and the inhabitants being driven from the capital and from the neighborhood towards the interior, it was with difficulty that I could obtain a sufficiency of such provisions as the country produced. My Paraguayan servant, Basilio, was also employed a large portion of his time in the same occupation; and between us we were able to obtain everything absolutely necessary for health and comfort, if not for luxury. With beef, which was generally very good, and the maize, or Indian corn, from the meal of which we made our bread, with the mandioca as a substitute for potatoes, and the eggs and chickens, and the Paraguayan tea, or maté, with a little sugar and wine which the mother of the President occasionally sent us, the want of provisions was the least of our troubles. In fact, but for our apprehensions of danger from Lopez, ours would have been a very happy family. Engaged in literary occupations through several hours of the day, with billiards for exercise and amusement in the daytime, and whist and chess in the evening, the days passed away on the whole very happily. When talking of our situation we naturally became anxious, and the arrest of so many persons which was going on around us led us to fear lest some similar evil might over-



take ourselves. But it is not in human nature to give way to protracted anxiety, and the very depression which we experienced sometimes seemed to be followed by rebounds of careless hilarity. Our English friends residing in the rear rooms of the Legation were uneasy, and, situated as they were, were not always very amiable towards each other. On my return from San Fernando I had told them what Dr. Stewart had said to me, though without giving him for authority; that I had learned their government was moving in their behalf, and I believed that ere long they would be rescued from their unfortunate situation. About this time the men among them received word that if they would leave with their families and reside elsewhere, they would again be taken into the government employ. It was unfortunate for them that I had told them of what Dr. Stewart had informed me, for, had they not been so advised, they would probably have accepted the offer at that time, and saved themselves from a great deal of subsequent misery. As it was, trusting that their government, which they knew was fully informed of their situation, would do something for their relief, they determined to remain with me. The English government, however, left them to destruction, and, as I found afterwards, the information which Dr. Stewart had received in regard to its intended action was not in accordance with the facts. These English were all most respectable and worthy people. They were consuming at a rapid rate the earnings of years. Though I had received them into my house, I did not supply them with provisions further than to allow my servant to bring in for them the food which he procured at the time he was foraging for my own family. The Legation might be said to consist of a sort of colony, as, besides my own family, of which Rodriguez and Carreras were members, there was another party living by themselves, consisting of Meincke, my private secretary, Bliss, Masterman, and Manlove up to the time that he was arrested. They had a cook to themselves, a German, who was employed by Manlove and Masterman at the time of the evacuation of the town.



Among those arrested about this time was Captain Simon Fidanza. This man was an Italian, and the owner of one or two steamers which plied on the waters of the Plata. Just before the war commenced he came to Paraguay with one of his steamers in order to sell it. Lopez made a bargain with him to buy the steamer and the cargo, which consisted mainly of provisions, for a stipulated price. Before the money was paid, or Fidanza could get away, Lopez changed his mind and resolved to confiscate the steamer, as it had come to Paraguay under the Argentine flag. He therefore took possession of it as a prize of war, and would not permit Fidanza to leave the country. He was, however, allowed to take a considerable quantity of the provisions from the vessel for his own use, and he accordingly remained in Asuncion for about a year and a half, when, as there was no prospect of the war's ending immediately, he took a *chacra* about three leagues from the capital, in what is called the Campo Grande. He seemed to have abundant means, had quite a retinue of servants around him, and, being naturally inclined to hospitality, he liberally entertained everybody that chose to call on him. There I visited him very often. His house was directly on the road to Limpio, where I was accustomed to go very frequently, and I never went or returned without giving him a call. It was also a resting-place, not only for me, but for the French Consul, M. Cochelet, and others, whenever we wished to go into the Campo for partridge shooting. We had always supposed, from the fact that Lopez had allowed him so large a share of his own property, that he stood in high favor; and from the freedom with which he conversed with us, and from the confidential way in which he talked with me particularly, I knew that he never could have been engaged in anything that ought to excite the suspicion of Lopez. I was therefore greatly surprised to learn of his arrest. I heard that he was a prisoner in Asuncion, and I went to see Colonel Fernandez, to request permission to send his meals from my house. He told me that he had gone below, not as a prisoner, but that the President desired to



see him in regard to certain matters, and that he would be well treated.

I also heard, about this time, of the arrest of a great many other foreigners. In fact, it seemed that all the foreigners were to be arrested and sent below. My boy Basilio used to tell me with bated breath, on his return from the market, that he had seen this, that, and the other man going towards the police-office, accompanied by a *sargente*. From some of the English about the arsenal I learned that they were all taken in irons to San Fernando by the different steamers. And not only were there many men thus arrested and taken away, but many women, and almost invariably the women belonging to the best families in Paraguay. They were detained sometimes a day or two at or near the arsenal, with heavy fetters upon their ankles, before they were taken down the river. Of such I believe that no one ever returned. Poor Fidanza was kept a long time a prisoner, and treated with such inhuman cruelty that he became insane, and in his delirium accused nearly everybody, not only of conspiracy against Lopez, but of many atrocious crimes. He was tortured until he was about to die, and then, in accordance with the custom of Lopez to finally execute those who would otherwise soon expire, he was shot.

Of these transactions which were going on in the army we knew nothing more than that the parties had been arrested. We did not know how many, but we knew that a large number of foreigners had been sent below, and from our knowledge of Lopez's character we had little hope ever to see them again. As I look back upon those days, I can hardly believe that we treated the subject of our own situation so lightly as we did, and that the days passed without constant and uninterrupted fear and anxiety. Yet so they did. It may have been that we were selfish and had too little sympathy for those who had been arrested; and yet we all felt that the same miseries to which they were subjected would very likely soon be ours. I am inclined to think that human nature is so constituted that unusual anxiety and depression of spirits will



be followed, in spite of reason, in spite of danger, by alternate periods of carelessness and mirth. So long as we enjoyed immunity we made the most of it, and allowed the impending dangers to annoy us as little as possible.

But this feeling of comparative indifference as to the future was interrupted on the 16th of June by the appearance of the Portuguese Consul, Leite Pereira, and his wife, who came to my house about twelve o'clock of that day, in a state of great fear and anxiety, to ask me to give them shelter and protection in my Legation. A few days before this, the French Consul, Cuberville, who had just before been at San Fernando paying court to Lopez and Madam Lynch, had returned, and had told Pereira the President was very much enraged with him. He believed him to be a friend of the Brazilians, for if he were not, and had no arrangement with them, he did not understand why he would pay out so much money to assist and support Brazilian prisoners and other destitute foreigners. He believed that he had some assurances of compensation. Pereira, on hearing this, became greatly alarmed, and on coming to my house told me he had received a letter from Benitez a few hours before, informing him that his consular character would be no longer respected. Suspecting that this letter would be followed by a police force to arrest him, he and his wife had mounted their horses, galloped into town, and came to the Legation to ask me to protect them. Pereira said that his only object was to find some shelter for his wife. They had previously brought to my house all their most valuable papers, and Pereira said that they contained vouchers for more than two hundred thousand dollars of money which he had expended for the relief of Brazilian and Argentine prisoners, and for the destitute subjects of other countries. His succor of these unhappy people was the only offence which he had committed against Lopez, and these vouchers were the only records of his guilt. He desired me to retain them, and, if he were never to escape alive from Paraguay, to endeavor to take them out of the country and deliver them to the Portuguese Minister at Montevideo. He



said that if the government of Paraguay should request me to surrender him, he should not ask, and would not permit, that I should endanger the safety of the other people in my Legation on his account ; that he would stay there, if I would permit him, until the government of Paraguay should call for him, which, perhaps, they would not do, but if they did he should deliver himself up. He should in that case only ask me to do the best I could for his wife, and to save his property if possible.

I was greatly embarrassed by this unexpected call upon me. I knew that if I received them, and permitted them to remain, it would greatly enrage Lopez, and that it would increase the danger which Rodriguez, Carreras, and, in fact, all the rest of us, were in. I consulted with both Rodriguez and Carreras as to what I should do. They said that it was a very embarrassing affair ; they wished it had not happened ; but as it was, they thought that I was not bound to send them away until the government should ask for them. This view corresponded with my own. In fact, I felt from the first that I could not turn them into the streets, and it was a great relief to me to have Rodriguez and Carreras take the same view of the matter. I was playing, as it were, with life and death. If I received Pereira into my house, it might cause the death of Rodriguez, Carreras, and others ; if I sent him and his wife away, they might be subjected to torture and execution, which possibly might be averted if I permitted them to stay. Therefore I was in duty bound to consult with the Orientales, and when they approved of my course I felt relieved very much from the responsibility. Though evil should come upon themselves, they could never censure me for it. The Pereiras therefore remained, and for two or three days everything about us seemed as quiet as before. On the 23d I received a note from Benitez, which was the beginning of a very long, and, on my part, anxious correspondence, and on the part of Benitez probably equally so, as before it was concluded he was called below, and, after being subjected to the customary torture, executed. To form a correct idea of



the Jesuitical cunning and malignant mendacity of Lopez, as he laid his plans by which he hoped to destroy us all and yet appear justified to the world, this entire correspondence should be given. That, however, would require an additional volume, and therefore I must content myself with giving a brief synopsis, showing how, with the appliances he had at hand, he could manufacture such testimony as he wanted. In the first letter I was asked if Leite Pereira was in my house. I could not deny that he was, though I complained of the terms in which the information was demanded.

On the 27th I received another letter from Benitez, in which, if I was not peremptorily ordered, I was very urgently invited, to deliver Leite Pereira into the hands of a police officer, who would present himself at my house two hours after the delivery of the letter. To this letter I replied on the succeeding day. In my reply I stated to Benitez that his note had occasioned me great surprise, as it had not shown a proper respect for the accredited minister of a friendly nation; that I was requested, in a manner almost peremptory, to deliver up a guest of mine against whom no specific crime or charge was laid, and who, like myself, was entirely ignorant of the nature of the accusation that had been made against him. I was also requested to deliver him to a police officer who was to be sent to take him away. I answered, with some asperity, that this request for a foreign minister to deliver a party to the police appeared to me of so strange a nature that I must, under any and all circumstances, decline to accede to it. All that I could do, even were a specific crime laid to the charge of Pereira, would be to advise him that my house could no longer give him an asylum. I also stated that all the writers on international law whom I had been able to consult agreed, both in regard to the extradition from one country to another, and to the delivery of persons who have fled for asylum to the Legation of a foreign minister, that he is not under any obligation to deliver them except for some definite and high crime against the state or sovereign. This being recognized as the law in such cases, it followed that before



surrendering Leite Pereira I must first ask for the specific offence or offences of which he was accused ; and in support of this view I gave a pertinent quotation from " Vattel's Law of Nations," and added that, according to that distinguished writer, the mere allegation that a person is accused, without stating his offence, is not a sufficient reason why he should be delivered up, and that if I had not surrendered him it was from no wish or intention of shielding any accused person from the penalties of violated laws, but simply to conform to the law established for such cases, so as to be my own justification. I added, that the case was one of greater delicacy and responsibility, from the fact that up to the day that Pereira came to my house he had been known to me and recognized by the government of Paraguay in an official capacity, that of Acting Consul of Portugal. His offence or crime, therefore, must have been committed while he still held that character, and the case presented grave doubts whether the consul of one nation has not exceptional and stronger claims on the protection of the minister of another than a person holding no public position. I then went on to quote from distinguished writers on international law, showing that consuls, to some extent, enjoy the privileges and immunities of ministers ; that, therefore, my position was one of difficulty and delicacy ; that a too ready acquiescence would justly expose me to the severe censure of my own government and to the obloquy of the civilized world, and therefore I should request that the specific charges against Leite Pereira should first be made, and that then, if they should be of the grave character which should require it, he would be advised that my Legation could no longer give him an asylum. I also stated that Leite Pereira had at all times expressed his entire willingness to leave my Legation, and even surrender himself to the authorities of the country, whenever I should indicate that my house could no longer give him protection ; that, conscious of no offence, and relying on the justice of the tribunals of Paraguay, he would be ready to meet and disprove any allegations that might be



brought against him. This last statement, to Lopez and to all who knew the character of the tribunals there, must have seemed a grim sarcasm; and when Pereira advised me to insert something to that effect, it was with the avowed hope that it might mitigate the punishment which he feared was in reserve for him.

This letter was despatched on the 28th of June, and we all waited in fear and trembling for the answer. But several days passed, and, as no reply came, we began to hope that Lopez would not insist on the rendition of Pereira. The excitement and fear of the first few days gradually wore off, and Pereira and his wife, who at first showed an apprehension and fear only to be compared with that of two fugitive slaves who, in the good old times when bloodhounds and slave-hunters were in fashion, had escaped beyond the borders of the slave-region and were hid in the house of some good Quaker, yet knew that the hounds and the hunters, backed up by the law, were on their track. Gradually they got into a more normal state of mind; and as they were both most excellent and agreeable persons, the time passed with us perhaps even more pleasantly than it had before their arrival. True, we discussed anxiously each day our situation and prospects, and many and curious were the speculations as to what course Lopez would take. But yet, as we heard nothing, we continued our usual literary avocations for some hours each day, interspersed with several games of billiards; and when evening came we had invariably our games of whist, chess, and euchre, and always retired fearful, yet hopeful, in regard to the morrow.



## CHAPTER XXII.

Benitez's Note of July 11, 1868. — The Beginning of the End. — The English leave the Legation. — Leite Pereira surrenders himself. — Pickets are placed around the Legation. — Carreras and Rodriguez are demanded. — Mysterious Charges against them. — Anxious Consultations. — Admirable Conduct of Rodriguez. — They finally give themselves up. — Note to Benitez in their Behalf. — Rights of Legation insisted on. — The Saddest Moment in this History. — Lopez demands the Surrender of Bliss and Masterman. — They are accused of High Crimes and Misdemeanors. — The Demand refused and Passports called for. — Rapid Succession of Notes. — Fresh Charges against Bliss and Masterman. — Offer to send them out of the Country. — Treatment of the English. — Sweeping Arrests at Luque. — A Brazilian Spy about the Legation. — Thomas Carter. — The Prisoners taken to the Army.

THIS period of expectation was of short duration. On the evening of the 11th of July, on returning from my customary *paseo* on horseback, I found that a letter had just been received from Benitez. All were intensely anxious to know its contents. On opening the letter I found it very long, consisting of nearly forty closely written pages. I glanced over it first to learn its general tenor, and found it was a recital of my own offences in having refused to leave the capital at the time its evacuation was ordered, of having received so many persons into my Legation, of not having answered certain official notes, and a multiplicity of offences that I had never before thought of or suspected that I had committed. It concluded with the notice that the asylum which had been given to persons in my Legation, who were not connected with it, must cease, and that, although it had been tolerated at the time of the evacuation, it would not be permitted any longer, and the government would give no explanation in regard to the individuals or the charges which it had to make against them. I was therefore requested to



dismiss, on the following day, all the persons in my house who were not members of my Legation, and in such terms that the only inference was, if they were not sent away they would be taken by force. All the persons in the house were immediately advised of the contents of this letter, and there was great consternation among them. Pereira said that, for his part, he should go immediately. He feared that he had precipitated the trouble which had come upon others, and considered that he could do no less than depart. I told him that I was under no obligations to send away anybody until specific crimes and offences were charged, and as no charges had been made in his case, I should not turn him out of my house. He could act his pleasure in the matter. To the English I also said they could go or stay, as they thought it best for themselves. No charge had been made against them, and Lopez had no right to demand them until something specific was alleged against them. They all saw, however, that the terms of the note were such as to show a determination to have them in one way or another, and that if they remained because specific charges of crime were not made against them, it would be but a short time before such charges would be manufactured and forthcoming.

Of what nature those charges might be, neither they nor I could have any idea ; but if specific crimes were alleged against them, I should then have no alternative but to give them up, even though convinced they were false. Lopez would then treat them as if they had committed the crimes charged and they were proved against them. They all concluded that the best thing they could do was to leave voluntarily the next morning, and they commenced making their preparations to do so the same night. Whither they were to go, or what was to become of them, they knew not. Carreras and Rodriguez seemed to think that it was not they that Lopez wished to get hold of, and did not believe that, if the others went, he would insist upon their departure ; and it was finally understood that the next day Pereira would go into the streets, where, of course, he would be immediately arrested, and the English would go



and report themselves to the police, and request to be sent to such place in the interior as the government might assign to them. Poor Leite Pereira and his wife that night were two of the most miserable beings that it has ever been my fortune to meet. They both seemed to realize that their separation was to be final. They were most tenderly attached to each other, and the misery depicted on their faces was such, that from sympathy there was scarce a wink of sleep in the whole house during that night. The next morning I found my house surrounded by a great number of police and soldiers. The English, when they opened their doors in the morning, found such a force watching for them as caused them to fear they were all to be taken to prison the moment they left the house. They requested me to go and see Colonel Fernandez in their behalf, and to learn of him what it was the desire of the government they should do, where they were to go, and to express to him their apprehension lest they were to be arrested as prisoners. I complied with their request, and when I told Fernandez what they had said to me, he answered that they were not to be arrested nor to be taken to prison ; that they should go, all of them, to the railroad station, where he would give me his word of honor they should be kindly and respectfully treated, and that assistance would be given them in carrying any of their goods, furniture, or provisions to the station ; and that within a day or two after they would be notified to what points in the interior they were to be removed. They accordingly commenced making preparations to depart. I busied myself in writing a brief letter in answer to that very long one from Benitez, in which I stated that I differed entirely from the opinions and conclusions advanced in his letter in relation to the rights and immunities of foreign ministers and legations, but that this did not affect the practical view of the case, as all the persons mentioned by name by him had informed me of their intention to leave my house voluntarily ; and as I supposed the government would not object that Mrs. Pereira should remain, she would do so, unless objection was made to it by the government. Carreras and



Rodriguez would remain for the present, as such was their desire ; I did not understand, and it had not been alleged, that any offence was charged against them, except that they had remained in the Legation ; and if for that offence the government were to insist on their leaving, it would assume that I had no right to have either guests or visitors in my house.

At about three o'clock in the afternoon the English all left and went to the railroad station. Fernandez had been as good as his word, and sent peons and carts to assist them. Pereira left at four o'clock. He started from the front door of the Legation, and as he reached the corner of the street several policemen who had been watching approached and arrested him, and this was the last I ever saw of him. At his departure, poor Mrs. Pereira seemed almost frantic. Carreras and Rodriguez, as did also Mrs. Washburn and myself, endeavored to console her by representations in which we ourselves had no confidence. Little did Carreras and Rodriguez then realize that within twenty-four hours their own situation would be as desperate as that of Pereira.

With the departure of Pereira and the English we all hoped that the government would be satisfied. Pereira had excited the suspicion and jealousy of Lopez, and we could understand why the latter wanted to get possession of his person, and we supposed that the object in requiring the English to leave the Legation was to induce the mechanics to re-enter the service of Paraguay. In his letter of the 11th of July, Benitez had complained that, by giving shelter to them, the public workshops were deprived of their services. Having attained these two objects, the person of Pereira and the services of the English, we hoped that the rest of us would be left alone and unmolested, though our fears that we should not be by far exceeded any such hopes. It may be supposed that during the evening our situation was earnestly discussed, and that when we retired we were all exceedingly anxious as to what the morrow might bring forth. By this time sleep was, to me at least, no longer tired nature's sweet restorer. The following



morning I arose very early, but before my toilet was completed I heard an ominous knock at my door. I hastened to answer it, and there I found the soldier who usually brought such missives with another letter, similar in appearance to all the others I had lately received, in his hand. I took it, and retired to read it alone before making its contents known to anybody else. I found that in its purport it was worse than ever I had even feared. It stated that I was in error in supposing that the only offence of Carreras and Rodriguez was in their remaining in the Legation, and I was informed that they were demanded by justice, and the necessity of their appearance before the tribunals was so urgent that I was requested to dismiss them before one o'clock of that day. And, as a specimen of the character and tone of the notes which I received, I will give this brief extract : —

“ Your Excellency will perceive that there exist offences on the part of these Orientales, and that not only are they to be brought before the tribunal, but that it is urgent to do so, and I trust that though your Excellency has counselled them, and requested them to remain in your hotel when they were disposed to leave it, now that you know they are guilty you will hasten to dismiss them.”

As I did not know that they were guilty, and had no proof that they were except this statement of Benitez, and believed they were entirely innocent, and as it was clearly intimated that they would be taken by force if they did not deliver themselves up voluntarily, I then saw that my rights as a minister would be of very little protection to them. As soon as Rodriguez and Carreras had arisen that morning I showed them the letter, and great was their surprise that they should be accused and declared guilty of grave offences. Of the nature of their offences they professed to be, and I believe were, entirely ignorant ; and the question then was, what course they should take. They were at full liberty to go, or wait till they might be taken by force. I should adhere to my resolution to deliver nobody up unless specific charges were alleged against them ; but if these charges should be made, then I could no



longer give them shelter in the Legation. We discussed anxiously the probable course that would be taken by Lopez in the event of their going away or of their remaining. Carreras at first seemed to think that the war was nearly at an end, and that if he remained in the Legation he should perhaps escape with his life, for he did not believe that Lopez would violate the Legation and take him by force, and said if I would promise to remain where I was until the close of the war, he should not deliver himself up. That, I foresaw, I could not do ; for if I made such a promise I most probably could not fulfil it, as subsequent facts soon demonstrated. I had long before sent in my resignation, and was every day expecting notice of my recall, and a successor to come to take my place. Lopez would take good care to see that successor before I did ; and as the capital had then been in another place than Asuncion for some five months, it was not likely that another minister would take up his residence there, and, if he did not, then my house would be no protection. Besides, I had taken the ground that I was under no obligations to send any one away till specific charges were alleged against him, and that if such charges should be made, as it was laid down by all the writers on international law that the house of an ambassador cannot be used as a refuge for criminals, then, the moment I was notified of the offence committed, if it were of a grave character, and whether true or false would not matter, I should have no alternative but to send them away. If I returned for answer that I would not dismiss them till some crime were laid to their charge, it was very certain that if they were not taken by force immediately, such a charge would be made soon after, and then it would be worse for them than if they had gone voluntarily. Rodriguez was of the opinion that the best thing for them both was that they should go as if voluntarily, and afterwards Carreras was of the same opinion, and they made up their minds that before the hour indicated in Benitez's letter they would take their departure. On this occasion I saw very much in the character of Rodriguez to admire. He was well aware



of the danger that was before him, and still, as there was and could be nothing against him, he had some hope that he would escape with his life. That he would be forced to undergo most inhuman treatment, he had no doubt; but it seemed to him that life at best is but for a few years, and whether they were a score or two more or less would not signify in the great future. He said that as for the suffering, he could endure perhaps as much as any man. He had always lived a temperate and regular life, was in good health, had a good constitution, and could endure very much before he would succumb to the great destroyer. Besides, he was of a hopeful temperament, and in whatever situation of life he found himself he had sufficient philosophy to make the best of it, and to believe that in the end all was for the best. He also said that he had much greater apprehensions in regard to Carreras than for himself. Carreras, he knew, was nervous and excitable; he had neither the endurance nor the temperament to undergo the trials which he feared were in store for them both; and altogether he showed a disinterestedness and sympathy for his friend, at a time when his own dangers and his own trials might be supposed to be sufficient to engage all his attention, such as I have never seen equalled, nor have I read either in history or fiction of such sublime self-abnegation. They both made such preparations as they had time to make in regard to their private affairs, and wrote to their friends of their circumstances and situation, and of my efforts in their behalf, and commissioned both myself and Mrs. Washburn to bear what might be their last messages to their friends and relatives. I busied myself during the morning in writing a note to Benitez, hoping that in some degree I could placate the wrath of his master, and perhaps obtain for them better treatment than they would otherwise receive. From that note I make the following extract:—

“Your Honor then adds that in regard to the longer residence of Srs. Carreras and Rodriguez, instead of being in no other way culpable than for remaining in this Legation, they are claimed by the tribunals of justice and in a manner so peremptory



that it is expected they will leave this Legation by one o'clock to-day.

"Having advised those two gentlemen of the contents of your note, they manifested much surprise, but expressed their readiness to go at once and meet and refute any charges that may be made against them, and they actually left before the hour indicated.

"It is with as profound regret as I ever experienced in my life to have two friends whom I very much esteem, and who have been my guests for some five months, leave my house under such circumstances, and I am fully persuaded that no accusation can be brought against them from which they will not triumphantly vindicate themselves. During their long residence with me we have naturally talked with entire frankness on every manner of subject, and it appears to me that if they had, either of them, ever committed or connived at any act criminal or offensive to the government of Paraguay, I should have learned something of it. But I have not. The first named, Dr. Carreras, it is well known, came to Paraguay to give any assistance in his power to the cause of this country against Brazil, risking his life and fortune to arrive here; but as his services have not been made available, he has desired to leave it for the same object, believing that by going abroad he could have an influence in enlisting the sympathies, if not the active assistance, of one or more of the Pacific Republics in behalf of this country. How such a man, whose innermost sentiments I know so well, could have committed any offence against a government he was so anxious to serve, is beyond my comprehension. The same interest in the cause of Paraguay has always been evinced by Mr. Rodriguez. This gentleman, your Honor will recollect, came to Paraguay in a diplomatic capacity, that of Secretary of the Oriental Legation, of which he was left in charge at the departure of the Minister, Sr. Vasquez Sagastume. After the fall of the government which he represented his diplomatic functions were suspended, and he then desired to leave the country, but as yet has not been able to do so. Yet, as your Honor is well aware, it is laid down by all writers on the rights of legation, that, until they can depart from the country, the members of a once accepted legation are entitled to certain immunities, and if any one commits an offence, the government to which he had been accredited is not authorized to try him, but may send him out of the country, and demand his punishment of his own government. . . .



"I have only to add that, if these gentlemen or Sr. Leite Pereira remain in this city, it will be a great gratification to me if I may be permitted to send their meals from my house, or other things necessary to their health or comfort. Will you please advise me on this point at your earliest convenience.

"The colored servant of Dr. Carreras still remains with me in the capacity of servant."

This letter was read to them before they left, and they appeared to feel that, coming as it did from the only minister of a foreign nation in the country, it would be to some extent respected. A little before the hour named in Benitez's letter they left the Legation, and each one took with him a bundle containing a few things such as they thought might be most needed in prison, — some changes of linen, a few books and toilet articles, and a blanket or two to protect them from the cold. Bidding us good by, and with many protestations of gratitude for the hospitality and protection which we had given them, they went out of the Legation, and, reaching the corner of the street, were arrested in the same manner as had been Leite Pereira the evening before. Their departure was the saddest event of my whole life, and the sorrow which I felt was participated in by all who remained in my house. After they were gone I reflected anxiously upon my own course, and though I believed I had acted with the best judgment possible under the circumstances by not insisting or begging them to remain in the Legation until they were accused of specific crime or taken by force, yet it occurred to me that possibly I had erred; that if I had told them to stay, and unequivocally replied to Benitez that they would remain in my Legation as long as I remained there, unless taken away by force, that perhaps they would have been no further molested, and would thus escape the sufferings to which I feared they would then be subjected.

Lopez had now got all that he had asked for up to this time. No one was left in my Legation who was not a member of it. All the others, of their own accord, had gone away from it, and I supposed that we should be left, for a while



longer at least, to a dismal peace. But even that was not in accordance with the plans of Lopez. He had evidently been informed instantly by telegraph of every event that had occurred, and within a few moments of the time of the departure of Carreras and Rodriguez was advised of it, for the same evening, at about five o'clock, I received still another letter from Benitez, and as everything from him was dictated by Lopez at his head-quarters, and then sent from Luque by a *chasque*, or courier, to Asuncion, this letter must have been sent by telegraph from San Fernando very soon after Carreras and Rodriguez were arrested. In this last letter I was requested to dismiss from my house Porter Cornelius Bliss and George F. Masterman, as they were accused of crimes not less grave than the others had been charged with. From this it was evident that my apprehensions lest I had made a mistake in relation to Carreras and Rodriguez were entirely groundless. They had both considered that, as Bliss and Masterman belonged to my suite, they would not be molested, nor did they think that Lopez would commit any act of violence against my Legation.

To this letter I replied on the following day, that Bliss and Masterman were members of my family ; that Masterman had lived in my house many months previous to the order for the evacuation of the capital ; his name had been given, as also had that of Mr. Bliss, a long time before, as being connected with the Legation, and that no exception had been taken to their remaining in it ; and that, as I considered them both members of my suite, I could have no discussion in regard to delivering them up or sending them from my house. To yield to such a demand I must abdicate all my functions and rights as a minister, for if I acknowledged the right of the government to take away one person whom I considered a member of my suite, I must concede it for all, and thus, if it so pleased the government, I might be left, not only without a servant, but without wife, child, or secretary ; for, according to their reasoning, if it were only alleged that any person belonging to my Legation was accused, I had no recourse but to



deliver him up. I concluded by saying that from the recent occurrences, and from the tone and temper of the recent correspondence, it was evident that I could be of no further use by remaining in Paraguay; that it had been my intention to remain to the end of the war, and until I could see the Paraguayan people once more in the enjoyment of that peace and prosperity which their valor and devotion had so nobly earned, but that I was compelled to abandon any such hope, as the course which I had felt it my duty to adopt seemed to have been so at variance with the views of the government of Paraguay. I could serve no good purpose by remaining longer. I therefore requested passports for myself and for all persons belonging to the Legation, and for such facilities for leaving the country as comported with the character of an accredited minister.

The demand for my passports was evidently what Lopez did not expect nor desire, and the reply to this note was somewhat more considerate and respectful than had been the preceding ones. A long argument was made to show that neither Bliss nor Masterman could properly be claimed as members of the Legation, and the pretence was set up that Bliss having once been employed in literary occupations by the government I had no right to receive him into my service; and that as Masterman had been released from prison at my request, to serve as medical attendant to my family, it would be a very ungracious act on my part to take advantage of a concession and favor to me by giving shelter to a criminal against the government.

There was one statement, however, in this letter, which greatly surprised us, and gave us the first intimation we had of what the government was trying to make out, and of the dangers which encompassed us about. Bliss and Masterman were accused of being members of a conspiracy which by agreement with the enemy was to have broken out in the country about that time, the object of which was to overthrow the government and destroy the army that was fighting for its existence. These points were elaborated with



considerable acuteness and Jesuitical cunning, and the pretence was set up that they and the others who had already left the Legation had abused my confidence, and without my knowledge had been guilty of crimes, and Bliss and Masterman were still criminally abusing the immunities which the Legation afforded them. The letter concluded by saying, that, after the statements and arguments which it had set forth, I must know that I was wrong in declining to deliver up "those rascals," and that the government was perfectly right in demanding them, and believed that I should expel from my house such persons, who, "bathing the national soil with fratricidal blood, pretended to undermine the just title to sympathy of your Excellency which the abnegation and great sacrifices of my country have acquired, as well as that which the singular and conspicuous services which its Chief Magistrate and General-in-Chief of its armies, Marshal Lopez, has achieved in this struggle." In the belief that such would be the case, and that I should see the error of my ways and the righteousness of those of Lopez, I was informed that my passports would not be sent to me, but if I still insisted upon it he would ask for the orders of President Lopez in regard to them.

From this letter I inferred that Lopez did not intend at that time to take Bliss and Masterman by force ; that he did not desire me peremptorily to demand my passports ; and that the question of their rendition would be allowed — for a time, at least — to remain in abeyance. I therefore took several days to answer the last note of Benitez, and I entered into a long argument to show that, under the circumstances in which I had engaged Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, they belonged to the Legation, and were entitled to all its immunities ; that I could not give them up without abandoning the rights of my government, and of myself as its representative. I quoted largely from such authorities on international law as I had in the Legation, including Martens, Wheaton, and Vattel, and showed that, according to these eminent writers, even if Bliss and Masterman were guilty of any crimes which might



be charged against them, not then was it my duty to surrender them to the tribunals of Paraguay to be punished. It was my duty to send them home to their own governments if they had committed any violation of the laws of Paraguay. I also protested against the assumption which Benitez had made from the beginning, that the persons whom he had asked me to deliver were guilty because they were accused, as it was in violation of that maxim of the common law that every man is innocent until proved guilty, and no proof had ever been submitted to me that either of them had committed any crime, and for me therefore to send away Bliss and Masterman as guilty, when there was no proof to that effect, and I was bound to regard them as innocent, would be a great dereliction on my part; I must be governed by the laws of my own country, and according to them I must have proofs of the offences charged before I could treat these gentlemen as criminals. I stated, moreover, that the law of nations had clearly prescribed the course to be followed when persons connected with a legation were found engaged in any unlawful proceedings, and that the government in which the legation was situated could only demand that they should be sent away to their own country and government to be tried; and therefore if they should adduce charges and proofs against Bliss and Masterman, and request me to comply with the established usage, I should have no alternative but to send them away for that purpose. I added, that I hoped this course would be satisfactory to the government of Paraguay, as it would remove persons obnoxious to it from the country, and would subject them to trial according to the laws of their own countries; and as there was little doubt that an American gunboat would soon be in those waters, there would be but little delay in carrying that plan into effect. I expressed my great surprise at the statement in his note, that a conspiracy had been formed, and that by agreement with the enemy it was to have broken out about that time. I had no knowledge or suspicion of any such conspiracy, though I had supposed from the strange and unusual measures taken by the gov-



ernment that something of a dangerous character had been discovered, but of its form or extent, or of the persons implicated in it, I had not the most remote idea. Such conspiracies frequently did happen during long periods of war, but in Paraguay I did not suppose there were any persons so foolish as to engage in a combination that could not offer any other issue than their own ruin; but this allegation in his note, however, convinced me that something of the kind had been attempted, but that I should cherish the hope it would be found very limited in extent, and that I confidently believed it would appear to be confined to a circle with which no person who had ever lived in my Legation had any relations, connections, or intimacies. I concluded this letter by reiterating my opinion that my views differed as widely as ever from those of Lopez, and that I saw no object in my further remaining in Paraguay; that I had desired to remain at least until the solution of the question of the passage of the American gunboat above the blockading squadron; that I knew such gunboat would come sooner or later, if it took the whole American navy to force its way; and that I did not believe the allies would venture to prevent its passage, and thus provoke a war with the United States, but that the gunboat would pass unmolested, and the allies would be subjected to such another humiliation as they had been before, when they attempted to prevent me from returning to my post of duty.

That there was no conspiracy, and that Lopez knew it, and that he had no suspicion that there was any, at this stage of the correspondence, I now know. At the time, however, I believed there was something, but who the parties could be that were engaged in it I could not surmise. And yet I received another letter from Benitez, dated on the 19th of July, the day before that one of my own of which I have just given a synopsis, telling me that the servants in my house who were permitted to go outside of the Legation were accused of bearing communications from the enemy to the refugees in my house. Lopez was well aware that none of the enemy



were within a hundred and fifty miles of Asuncion, and for anybody beyond the lines to communicate with the capital, he must send his messenger through a region that no fugitive trying to escape from threatened death had been able to pass for fifty years. This letter, therefore, was only to be taken as a threat, and was another link by which Lopez intended to involve, not only Bliss and Masterman, but myself, and all in my house, in his pretended conspiracy.

On the 21st another letter was received, of a still more ominous character. In this I was told that by agreement of the traitors with the enemy, the latter were to commence certain movements on or before the 24th, and that as it appeared probable the criminals, Bliss and Masterman, might escape from my house if they should not be previously imprisoned, the government "would view with the greatest pain an occurrence of so much importance, which would once more disappoint the good faith and confidence which I was pleased to show towards these criminals, in thinking it my duty to discuss and delay up to that time the apprehension of individuals so dangerous to the national cause." I was requested to give the speediest possible answer to this note.

To this I replied on the following day, after having conferred with both Bliss and Masterman as to what it was most proper to do under these circumstances. From this time I did not send any letter to Benitez without having first submitted it to them, and if they had any suggestions to make I considered them deliberately, and no letter was sent away containing anything which either of them wished to have omitted, or in which I had failed to advance any fact or argument that either of them desired to have presented. Their lives I considered were at stake, and I did not dare to take the responsibility of any act against their wishes which might prejudice their safety. We were all encompassed by the same dangers. Theirs were greater than mine. They would probably be seized before I would be. But if they were seized, taken by force from the Legation, I was persuaded that their arrest would be followed by that of my-



self and everybody else in my house, and that no one of us would ever be permitted to tell to the world the story of the destruction of his companions. Benitez had pretended that the government was apprehensive lest they should try to escape. They knew that was but an impudent pretence, for Lopez was well aware they would not venture beyond the precincts of the Legation if they could avoid it. It was still another link in the chain of evidence which Lopez was forging to show to the world that there was a conspiracy against him, and the object of it evidently had been to have this letter appear in the published correspondence as a part of the proof that the conspiracy had really existed. For me to have said so, however, would have precipitated the very danger we were trying to avert. I could only reply, that I did not participate in his opinion regarding the criminality of these persons; but as I was entirely ignorant of the nature and extent of the combination to which he alluded, I would take care that if the revolution which was said to be impending should break out, they should not escape, for that I would hold them prisoners in my Legation until I could send them out of the country, or until the government might not object to their being set at liberty. This was the answer which was considered by Bliss and Masterman, as well as myself, to be such that Lopez could not complain that I was trying to screen criminals, or to aid them in escaping clandestinely from the country. Accordingly Bliss and Masterman changed their quarters, and both occupied the same room, and I went through the form of locking them in, and they were there as voluntary prisoners. This, however, endured but a short time, as Benitez informed me within a few days that such treatment of these "criminals" was not considered satisfactory, after which I made no pretence of any restraint upon them.

The English, after they left the Legation, all went to the railroad station, where they were huddled together in a few rooms, and found it very difficult to obtain anything to eat, notwithstanding Fernandez had promised me that they should be well treated. They were now anxious to be sent into



the interior, and I went to see Fernandez to make the request that they should be better provided for. That they were not, I am persuaded, was no fault of his, for of all the Paraguayans whom Lopez had about him, or who enjoyed any of his confidence, he seemed to be the only one having any of the feelings of humanity, or any desire to mitigate the sufferings of others. At the time they left, I had requested that two of the women might be allowed to remain in the Legation, as such was the desire of Mrs. Washburn. Benitez had replied that they would be allowed to return, but as Bliss and Masterman had been demanded immediately after, and everything seemed to indicate that we should all probably be driven from the city, if not arrested as prisoners, I could not advise them to separate from their companions.

While they remained at the station, I went every day to learn of their situation and see what I could do for them. On the 15th of July they told me that the night before the train from Luque had come in loaded with prisoners in fetters. Who they were they did not know, as no lights were allowed in the station, and they could not leave their rooms. They knew there were a great many, and they distinctly heard their groans and sighs as they were forced from the cars and driven from the station to the bank of the river. A few days after this I learned that these English had all gone into the interior, but to what point they had been sent, or whether they had gone together or been scattered in different parts, I could not ascertain.

I endeavored to comply with my promises to Carreras, Rodriguez, and Pereira to send them their meals from my house, provided they remained in the capital, and on the morning of the first day the food sent them was allowed to be left. Until this time I had been permitted to send Manlove his meals every day. At first, after his arrest, I sent them by a Brazilian. This Brazilian was the same person whose presence in and about the rooms of Manlove, Masterman, and Bliss I had prohibited, as I regarded him as a spy, and which interference Manlove had resented, and on that account left the Legation



several months before. While hanging about my premises he related to some persons the story of his capture and treatment by the Paraguayans. Being a man of some education, he was found useful, and therefore had never been executed. He was employed, for a long time, to write letters over the signatures of various Brazilians who had been taken or killed, to send into the allied camp, making such statements as Lopez desired to have circulated among the allies. They were generally to the effect that all prisoners were well treated there ; that they had plenty to eat, and did not wish to return ; that the Paraguayans were so strong they never could be conquered, and advising all his countrymen to come over at the first opportunity, and they would be well received and obtain great favors from his Excellency Marshal Lopez. He was also sent forward with the pickets to the front, and forced to stand up and call out to his countrymen to come over, to leave the ranks of the tyrant Don Pedro, where they were starved and ill-treated, and come over to the land of milk and honey, where they would be sure to be well received and provided with everything they could desire. At the evacuation of Asuncion he had been left there, and occupied a house directly in front of my own, and I had no doubt that the object in permitting him to remain was that he should serve as a spy upon my premises ; though what the object was in having a Brazilian spy about me I could not understand, as there were always a large number of Paraguayans patrolling the streets in the vicinity, and always a picket of three at each corner of the house. This man, for a while, was allowed to carry Manlove his meals, and in return for this he received food for himself. Some time, however, before the departure of the English and the Orientals, he had been arrested, and another person, a man by the name of Carter, had performed this service. Carter had been a sailor on board an American gunboat, and, going ashore at Montevideo, he had done as such persons often do, got drunk, and while in that condition had been taken off as a soldier of the allies. In the first battle in which he was engaged, he deserted over to the Paraguayans,



and being sent to the capital he was soon taken sick, and in such condition I found him. Through the medical assistance of Mr. Masterman he partially recovered, and on the arrest of the Brazilian he was employed to take Mr. Manlove his meals. He too had been arrested; but as he was a prisoner of war, and besides that was a deserter from the American flag, I could not interfere in his behalf, and I made no inquiries in respect to him. After that I was obliged to send the meals by my private secretary, Mr. Meincke. The day after the arrest of Rodriguez and Carreras, he was told that he need bring nothing more for them, for they had gone below, and the next day he was told that he need bring nothing more for Manlove, for "he had gone to his destiny."



## CHAPTER XXIII.

Visit from the Italian Consul. — Particulars of the Arrests at Luque. — Masterman writes his Vindication. — Papers of Mr. Bliss. — Their Preparations for Arrest. — Artifices to conceal our Manuscripts. — Colton's Atlas. — We learn of many Executions. — Visit from Madam Lynch. — She announces the Discovery of a Great Conspiracy. — She vouches for Lopez's Kindness of Heart. — Her Threats. — That Ominous Knock. — Benitez gives Particulars of an Intended Outbreak to take Place July 24. — He charges Mr. Bliss with a Design to assassinate Lopez. — Extract from his Note. — The Dangers thickening.

FOR several months after the evacuation of the capital a few foreigners were permitted to reside in *quintas* but a few miles distant, so that in my daily *paseos* I would frequently call on them, to get any news they might have, and discuss the situation. But about the time of the arrest of those who had left my house, I learned that the men had all been arrested and carried to head-quarters, and the women sent into the interior. The English engineers dared not be seen speaking to me, and I did not force my unwelcome company upon them. We were surrounded by an appalling mystery, and were as ignorant of the cause of it as though we had been all the while a thousand miles away. Surely, we thought, all these strange proceedings are not without motive. Lopez would not arrest all the best men in the country unless he had discovered some plot or conspiracy that threatened his power, and yet we could not believe that any of the arrested persons with whom we had been intimate had ever held any such designs. If they had, they had been too suspicious of us to give us a hint of their purposes.

On the 18th of July, this monotony was interrupted by a visit from the Italian Consul, Signor Chapperon. He was in as great a mystery as we were, and could tell us nothing further



than that it was surmised a conspiracy had been discovered, and that the purpose of it was to arrest or murder Fernandez and Sanabria, as they alone had any military authority, and then start a revolution. It was under the orders of these two that all the recent arrests had been made, and the inference of Signor Chapperon was, that, if there had been a conspiracy, the first step in the plot was to put them out of the way. There was but one foreigner left in the new capital. This was the Spaniard José Solis, the confidential agent and business man of Madam Lynch. All the civil officers of the government had been arrested, including the judges, the clerks, and the accountants of the different departments. He said that Benitez himself appeared to be in a great fright, as if fearing that he too might soon be arrested; that for the administration of the government there only remained at the new capital the old Vice-President; Benitez, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs; the Chief-Justice; Ortellado, and the Chief of Police, Sanabria.

The arrest of all the others, without giving them any chance to confer together, was skilfully accomplished by Sanabria. One after another had been ordered to the station, where fetters were put upon them all. The people at Luque were terror-stricken at these proceedings. They saw those whom they had supposed to be highest in the confidence of Lopez taken off and put in irons. Aquino, the manager of the *Semanario*, whose last years seemed to have been spent in little else than glorifying the great Lopez, lent a ready hand to this work, and appeared to be the lieutenant of Sanabria, and to seek, by his zeal and readiness to arrest and manacle others, to win credit for himself. But when all the persons arrested had been safely fettered and placed in the cars, Sanabria turned upon him, and said, "You too." The fetters were accordingly placed upon his stout ankles, and his gross form was placed upon the train with the others. On reaching the station at Asuncion, they were forced to get down from the cars with their fetters upon them, and to make their way to the river, whence they were taken down to head-quarters at San Fernando.



The information given me by the Italian Consul, that besides the foreigners many Paraguayans had been arrested, was in one sense a relief to us. We had feared that all these strange proceedings which had recently taken place were aimed exclusively at the foreigners ; but when we learned that so many Paraguayans, some of whom had been the most abject and willing tools of Lopez in carrying out his arbitrary and tyrannical measures, had also fallen into disgrace, we imagined that something of a dangerous character must have been discovered, for we did not then suppose he would arrest and torture people unless they had actually been guilty of some crime. If there were in reality a conspiracy, we believed the parties to it would be discovered, and that those who had had nothing to do with it, when that fact was ascertained, would be no longer persecuted ; and as we were certain that nobody in the Legation had ever known or thought of such a thing, during their residence there or before it, we thought it augured favorably, not only for us who were left there, but for the others who had been there and on going away were arrested. We knew nothing, and could only judge of what had transpired from what we had actually seen and from the letters of Benitez. We were in a most terrible state of anxiety. Bliss and Masterman were expecting every day to be taken by force from the Legation. From the moment that they had been accused of still holding communication with the enemy, which was an impossibility, and a charge so absurd that it was clear that Lopez intended to respect neither probabilities, truth, nor right, we expected momentarily to see the house entered by a force of soldiers, and that they would be taken away and the Legation searched. Masterman had prepared a statement of his case and of the cruelties and injustice which he had suffered, that he desired to have published at some future time in an English newspaper. He knew that if the statement were to fall into the hands of Lopez it would be fatal to him, and he did not wish to destroy it, for he was not sure that he would be arrested, or, if he were, that I might not be able to take away his vindica-



tion of himself. He therefore folded up his manuscript and thrust it into an empty demijohn, thinking that if the Paraguayans should search the house, as they were not as sharp as London detectives, they would not think of looking in any such place, especially as there were other empty demijohns in the different rooms of the house. Bliss had been very careful, since his residence in Paraguay, to write nothing against Lopez; but at the time of the approach of the ironclads, in February, thinking that the day of deliverance was at hand, he had commenced a narrative of the events of that time, and in his introduction to it he had made some statements to the effect that at last we were all delivered from the most terrible despotism ever known, and that the power of the monster who had inflicted such terrors and atrocities, not only on his own people but on foreigners, was at an end. This was the only thing he had written which could do him any harm were it to fall into the hands of Lopez, and he said that would not be found, as he had left it in his former house before taking up his residence in the Legation. But I told him the police had been searching that house. With good reason he started up alarmed, and said, "If that is so, I am gone. I will go and look among my papers, and see if I can find it." Within a few moments he returned, bringing the manuscript, and instantly the dangerous half-page was torn into fragments.

Besides the papers of Bliss and Masterman, there were others of my own in the house that I did not think it prudent that Lopez should see. These were my own manuscripts, which I had been preparing for the purpose of this history. The reader of the preceding chapters of this work may judge whether or no their perusal would have pleased Lopez. I knew that if he were once to see them, neither the manuscripts nor the writer of them would ever leave Paraguay, and I was expecting daily, hourly, that Bliss and Masterman would be arrested and my house searched. I had some three hundred pages which I had prepared with a great deal of labor, and with the assistance of Carreras and Rodriguez, a part of which is the same that is given in this work in regard



to the commencement of the war. If I destroyed this manuscript, I could never get the materials together again, and I was exceedingly loth to lose it; but if my house were to be searched, probably every manuscript paper would be taken away. The last letters from Benitez had so clearly expressed the determination of the government to have Bliss and Masterman by force, if I did not send them away voluntarily, that we had no doubt the Legation would be violated and they would be dragged away. So convinced were they that they were to be seized, each had a little carpet-bag prepared, containing some clean linen, a few books, and such other things as they thought might be most necessary, and which, perhaps, if taken to prison, they would be allowed to retain. They had these things so packed that at a minute's notice they could take each his bag and march. But how could I save my manuscripts in that case? If the Legation were violated, the house would undoubtedly be searched, and I knew not where to hide them. It was impossible to bury them in any part of the yard, for by night and by day there were always policemen about, peering through the fences, and my Paraguayan servants would not dare to keep silence or fail to report anything of that kind which they might see. In fact, to attempt to bury them would insure their capture. The floor of my sleeping-room was of brick, and I considered whether I could not remove the carpets, take out a few bricks, and deposit them below; but every night, as soon as my windows and blinds were closed, I could hear the policemen whispering and their swords clanking beneath the window of my bedroom. Any noise which they might hear would only increase suspicion, and also lead to the discovery of that which I was trying to hide. So convinced were we for a time that the house was to be entered and searched, that I had a fire built in the oven of my kitchen as if for baking, and my manuscripts were laid in the room near by it, so that Mrs. Washburn, on the appearance of a police force at the door, and while I was parleying with them to detain them, could fly to the kitchen and throw the manuscripts into the fire; but this



repeated heating of the oven without baking anything in it would be sure to attract the attention of my servants, who would report to the police, and perhaps my object might be suspected. Then I thought I would destroy the manuscripts, but being dissuaded from this I hit upon the device of taking a large Colton's Atlas and placing a sheet of the manuscript between every two leaves of the book, and if the police were then to enter I did not believe they would be acute enough to discover it. Accordingly, one night, after the doors and blinds were all closed, I sat in my parlor holding the atlas in my hand, and turned over the leaves while Mrs. Washburn laid a sheet between each two leaves of the book. When this was done I placed the atlas back where it was accustomed to be, with other books over and around it, and thought that I had succeeded in concealing my work so well that the detectives of Lopez were not sharp enough to discover it. But it occurred to me, the next morning, that I had not been any sharper than I had supposed the Paraguayans to be, as at the very time I was engaged with Mrs. Washburn in putting the manuscripts between the pages of the atlas, the key-hole of my parlor door was open, so that if my own servants or the police had looked in they could have seen clearly what we were doing. My precautions, therefore, had increased the danger, for if the house were to be entered, the first thing that would be searched would probably be my Colton's Atlas. Those manuscripts did not remain in the atlas long after that. They were all shaken out, and then I thought that the danger attending their preservation was greater than their value would justify me in incurring. I thought of every possible place where they might be hid, but I could not imagine one in which the danger would not be increased if they were deposited in it; for if any papers were discovered which had been hidden, they would be certain to be very closely scrutinized, whereas if they were lying as if casually among other papers, they might be less carefully examined. In this dilemma it occurred to me that my dining-table had an oil-cloth cover which had never been taken off during all the



time I had occupied the house. Mrs. Washburn was stationed as a sentinel, that no one might come near (for I could not even shut the door or close the windows in the daytime without attracting attention), while I quickly removed the oil-cloth cover and distributed the sheets evenly over the table, and returned the oil-cloth to its place. I then felt very sure that, if the house were searched, these papers would not be found. After that I had little anxiety about them, though it occurred to me very often that it was a singular situation for the minister of a great nation to be in. Perhaps the danger was magnified by my own fears ; and yet I thought then as I think now, and as I believe all who were in the country during those terrible times and escaped will say, that I had good reason to take these precautionary measures. People who know nothing of the danger may think otherwise, but in this case their condemnation must be in exact proportion to their ignorance.

From our Paraguayan servants we learned some things in regard to the fate of the parties who had been arrested and sent to San Fernando. One of them used frequently to go out and talk with the policemen or soldiers stationed on the corners of the streets, and they told her that some of the parties arrested had already been executed. This information confirmed us in our fears, that, if Bliss and Masterman should be taken, they would soon share the same fate ; and that knock, so often heard at my door as to become familiar, by the bearer of government notes to me, came to be dreaded as though it had been a summons to execution. These portentous letters usually arrived at about sunrise in the morning or sunset in the evening, and we had learned by this time to expect that every letter would be worse than the previous one ; and if a morning passed till eight or nine o'clock, we would then hope to hear nothing more for that day at least, and would discuss during the intervening hours between this and evening what might probably be the purport of the next missive.

The 21st of July was one of our longest and most anxious days. Sufficient time had passed for writing an answer to my last note to Benitez, and we were somewhat surprised that



nothing came for that day. At about eight o'clock in the evening, however, after the doors and blinds were closed, who should come to visit us but Madam Lynch. She had come from her own house on foot, though the night was very dark, and it had been cloudy and rainy throughout the day. I knew instantly that her visit portended something important, either good or evil. I hoped for the best, and in conversation with her expressed my surprise at what I had heard had taken place ; so many people had been arrested, some of whom I supposed were the most loyal men in the country, and many of them I had always believed to be the most devoted friends of Lopez. I could not understand what it all meant. She said that a great conspiracy had been discovered, but of the details of it she could not give me any information ; she would not be allowed to do so, but there was no crime conceivable but that the conspirators contemplated committing. I said, if that was the case, it was as much for my interest as that of anybody else to have it discovered, for if they were contemplating any general massacre, as they had none of them ever confided to me anything in regard to it, but had studiously kept it secret from me, evidently I should be one of the victims. She said, "O no ; that is not in their plans at all, I believe." She spoke of Berges and Venancio Lopez as being among the principal conspirators. I expressed my great surprise at that, as Berges had always appeared to me as if he were the most devoted and loyal supporter of the government and the President, and I did not understand how he could at the same time have been engaged in a conspiracy. It was incredible to me. She said the discovery of this plot had been a great blow to the President. Many of his best friends, those for whom he had done the most and on whom he most relied for support, had been proven false and treacherous. I said that it might be so in regard to some of those who had been arrested, as I scarcely knew them, and of course could say nothing about them ; but in regard to those who had been in the Legation, nothing could convince me that they had ever been engaged in any plot or conspiracy. I knew their every



thought so well, and had discussed the situation in every aspect so thoroughly, that I knew they had never had any such ideas up to the time of their arrest. "But they have confessed," she said. I replied that under certain circumstances confession was no evidence. People under fear, or on promise of reward, might confess to facts of which they were not guilty. "O no," said she, "there has been no constraint put upon them. It has all been voluntary. The President would never use restraint, or force them to confess against their will. He is very kind-hearted." This last expression she repeated several times, each time waiting for me to respond to it. Evidently she had come on a diplomatic mission, and her object was to see if I could be induced to approve and justify Lopez in all his atrocities. I remarked to her that it had been my intention to leave Paraguay for some time; that the situation there was not agreeable; cut off as we were from all communication with Buenos Aires, we were unable to obtain many things absolutely necessary for health and comfort, and the town being evacuated, and having no neighbors or communication with anybody, it was a position which I had not intended to occupy any longer than I could avoid, but that, owing to the strange turn which affairs had taken, I was anxious to remain to witness the *dénouement*, and learn of the facts in relation to the conspiracy. I should, however, send my family away very shortly. Mrs. Washburn found remaining there to be very disagreeable, and as she could not obtain many of the necessaries of life, both she and our child were exposed to dangers and inconveniences which I was not disposed to have them subjected to, and therefore she would soon go to Buenos Aires. To this Madam Lynch replied, "If she can," in a tone that said as clearly as words could say that neither Mrs. Washburn nor the child would be permitted to leave Paraguay. I affected not to understand it in that sense, and continued my conversation, saying that of course she would be able to leave, as there could be no difficulty in the way, since a minister or any member of his family could at all times leave any country whenever it suited their



convenience ; and therefore, as she was anxious to leave, of course she would go to Buenos Aires. She again repeated, "If she can." It was evident from this that she had been sent to learn if I could be induced to become the aid and apologist of Lopez in the robbery and execution of all the better class of Paraguayans and of the foreigners, and, if not, to threaten us with the vengeance of the "kind-hearted" President. The intimation that Mrs. Washburn would not be permitted to leave Paraguay was a semi-official notice that we were entirely within the power of Lopez ; that our ambassadorial privileges would not avail us if we should not in all things conform to his wishes ; that we were prisoners in his hands, and might expect the worst.

The next morning, a little before sunrise, at the usual hour when such notes were received, the dreaded knock was heard, and the barefooted soldier, with his scarlet sack and military cap and sword, was at my door with another letter from Benitez. Madam Lynch had undoubtedly advised Lopez of her visit to my house, and that she had made nothing by it, and probably so modified the report of the conversation that had taken place as to suit her own wishes, as this woman never was known to speak the truth when falsehood would serve her purpose as well. The letter had also undoubtedly been prepared to be forwarded to me or not, according as she should report the result of her interview. When she left the house that evening, I told both Bliss and Masterman that her visit boded no good to them or to any of us, and the next morning I found, on opening the letter, my prophecy had been fulfilled. Great surprise was expressed that I should still insist on keeping in my house "criminals and rascals," as they were called, "guilty of high treason," and saying that the conspirators, together with the enemy, were to make certain important movements on the 24th of that month, and that fears were entertained lest on that occasion they should attempt to escape from my house, for which reason an immediate answer was requested.

In my letter of July 22 I said : "Your Honor advises me



that the treasonable combination with the enemy was to have made certain movements on or before the 24th of this month, and it was apprehended that the persons in my house accused of being engaged in it would seek to escape, if not previously made prisoners."

In his letter of the 23d, however, Benitez, with Jesuitical mendacity and impudence, accuses me, in these words, of having given him the information that such a plan was in contemplation: "It is not I, Mr. Minister, who have said to your Excellency that the complot had been appointed to break out to-morrow, but I thank you for the intelligence." As I had given no intelligence, and had only stated that he advised me that such was to be the case, I could but ill express my indignation at the falsehood and impudence of Lopez, and his transparent intention of attempting to frighten and bully me into yielding to his demands. In addition to this he also said: "It is now my duty to express to your Excellency, that from your own house correspondences from the enemy's generals are received and replied to, treating of the details of the plot; and when your Excellency insists withal in the terms employed, and does not wish to believe in ingratitude, I am obliged to fear that the same conduct is still observed in your Excellency's house." That was as transparent a falsehood to my mind as the other, in which he accused me of having given him information of the time when the conspiracy was to have broken out. Lopez knew perfectly well that there was no enemy within a hundred and fifty miles of Asuncion, and that it was utterly impossible for any communications to pass to and fro between my house and the allied generals. Benitez then complains that his official declarations have not been accepted by me as proof of the guilt of Bliss and Masterman, in preference to their own statements. He adds that he shall not give any specific details concerning the accusations against them, since I had declared that even then I would not deliver them up, and says that I did not take into consideration the condition of the country and the great danger which it was in, and that if, under such circumstances, the



immunities of a minister were to reach to an extent which I claimed, no nation in the world would accept an embassy. He then abuses Bliss and Masterman as mendicants, who went to Paraguay begging their bread, and then became there *agents of the enemy*, and who had not appeared before the tribunal because, after having become criminals, they had obtained access to the Legation of a friendly power, in order to continue thence with impunity so iniquitous a work. To this he added the still more startling paragraph :—

“ Let your Excellency add to this that Porter Cornelius Bliss has signed in a secret committee of reciprocal obligation, swearing the treacherous assassination of the President of the Republic.

“ I cannot but declare categorically to you, that this Ministry does not recognize Cornelius Porter Bliss, American citizen, and George F. Masterman, British subject, as members of your Legation, and consequently I cannot accept a discussion with your Excellency upon that basis. I regret, Mr. Minister, that my friendly notes have not been able to avoid the present statement, and I am under the unavoidable obligation of again requesting the expulsion of these criminals from your hotel before sunset on the 25th instant, in doing which you will not only act with justice, but according to the law of nations.”

I now saw that Lopez intended to pay no regard whatever to the truth, and that the correspondence which he had begun in his *Semanario* was to contain assertions and charges wholly false, but which, as he intended that no one should survive who could disprove them, would serve as his justification beyond the limits of Paraguay. I also understood from this letter, that if, before the time indicated, I did not send away Bliss and Masterman, they would be taken by force. They understood it in the same sense, and made their preparations to be carried off to torture and execution. How anxiously the hours passed ! How we longed to hear that the sluggish Brazilians were in motion, and that a great and decisive battle had been fought ! How we longed to hear that an American gunboat had come to our rescue ! The Wasp, we knew, had been turned back by the Brazilians ; but we gathered hope



from the fact that Admiral Godon was no longer in command of the squadron, and indulged the illusion that his successor would have some regard to the honor of the American flag and the rights of his government, and would not allow us to be held there as prisoners till not one should be left to vindicate his companions, and expose the Jesuitical duplicity, falsehood, and cruelties of Lopez.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

A more Ominous Letter. — The Purposes of Lopez become more Evident. — Visit to Berges. — Bliss and Masterman declared not entitled to Legation Privileges. — Threats to take them by Force. — Uncertainties and Doubts. — Was there a Conspiracy? — Speculations. — Colonel Marquez and other Refugees. — Official Receptions. — Correspondence with Benitez. — Benitez visits the Legation. — An Excited Discussion. — He threatens Strong Measures. — Arrest of Bliss and Masterman hourly expected. — Life in the Legation.

THOUGH the mystery in which we had been so long groping could not be more dense than it had been for the last two weeks, it was daily becoming more threatening. On the 23d, another letter of a far more portentous character than any preceding was received. It read as follows : —

“MINISTRY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
LUQUE, July 23, 1868.

“I have the honor to request of your Excellency the immediate delivery of a sealed packet of communications which the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Berges, delivered to you in his residence at Salinares, when, on the afternoon following the arrival of Berges from San Fernando to Asuncion, you visited him in that house, where you personally took charge of the said packet in order to keep it, as in fact, on arriving at your Legation at nightfall, you went with it to your office.

“This packet being, Mr. Minister, of great importance for my government, you will allow me to request its delivery to the officer who bears the present communication.

“I improve this occasion to salute your Excellency with distinguished consideration.

“GUMESINDO BENITEZ.”

A package delivered to me by Berges the day after his ar-



rival from San Fernando! I did not see him for weeks after his return from San Fernando, and when I did see him he gave me no package, nor did he ever allude to one. I had seen him but twice since his return, some two months before. A month before, having learned that he was at his quinta, and very unwell, I had, as a matter of courtesy, gone out to see him, where I found him very sick and miserably forlorn. His limbs were partially paralyzed, and he was in such a state he could scarcely turn in his bed. I expressed regret at finding him so infirm, and asked him if I could be of any service to him, or could send him anything that would conduce to his health or comfort. He said that there was nothing I could do for him, unless it was to send him a little brandy. I told him that I had none. I asked him if he had any news from the army, and he said no further than that he believed the war was nearly over, as the Brazilians could not hold out much longer, their credit was exhausted, and several provinces were in revolt. My call was very brief, and, promising to come and see him again within a few days, I took my leave and went to the house of Lopez's mother, where I had some conversation with her. She appeared to be very sad, and very anxious to know something of the condition of her children, but I was unable to give her any information. I saw Berges but once more, and that was about two weeks later, when, as Mrs. Washburn and myself were passing by on horseback, I suggested that I would run in a moment and see the Minister for Foreign Affairs. I found him, as before, in bed, and but slightly improved. I had but a very few words with him, the general purport of which was about the same as on the previous occasion.

As these were the only times that I had seen Berges since his arrival from San Fernando, and as on neither of them had he given me any paper or said a word which he could have objected to having heard by Lopez himself, I was somewhat staggered at this letter, in which I was requested to deliver a package which I had received, not a letter that Berges *said I had received*, but which *I had received* from him on a certain



day. I replied instantly, setting forth the facts as here stated. But I foresaw that the matter would not end here. It was getting more and more evident that Lopez was forming a plan to engulf us all, and this letter in regard to imaginary papers was but a link in the chain of evidence he was forging as a justification of his acts when all those whom he had accused should no longer survive to contradict it.

Having replied to this letter, I proceeded to write an answer to the preceding one of Benitez, in which he so strenuously demanded the surrender of Bliss and Masterman. In that letter, alluding to his statement that he thanked me for giving information in regard to the complot which was to break out on the 24th, I said that I was entitled to no thanks from him for that ; all the information I had on that point was derived from his letters, and what I had said in regard to it was almost a literal translation of his own words, and, so far from his thanking me, it was rather for me to thank him for any information of that kind. The first knowledge I had of the matter was contained in his note of the 21st. But I waived all discussion as to whether Bliss and Masterman were rightfully and legally members of the Legation ; I had assumed they were so, I believed correctly, and could not recede from that point. To send them away after that would be not only weak, but would be acting illegally, and would expose me to the censure of my own government. Holding the opinions I did, there was no other course for me to pursue ; and if Lopez were so confident that I was legally in the wrong, he could take them by force, and then the nations of the civilized world would be called upon to pronounce upon the legality of the act. My judgment might be wrong ; but so long as it was my judgment, I should be commended for adhering to it.

I stated, moreover, that if these parties to whom I had given shelter and hospitality had in the mean time been engaged in a plot or conspiracy against the government of Paraguay, there was no person in the country, except those whose lives were threatened, who had so much reason as I



had to desire that justice should be done and the criminals punished. If persons residing in my house had been, without my knowledge, engaged in a conspiracy, it was an act of gross bad faith to me, and they deserved, for their conduct towards me at least, to be punished. It is true I did not believe, in fact I knew as well as one man can know the opinions and sentiments of another, that nothing of the kind had ever been meditated or attempted by any person who was or had been in my Legation. To suspect otherwise I must have supposed a degree of hypocrisy and ingratitude towards me such as would, if proved against them, have completely excused me from any further attempts to protect them. They had no right, while they were guests of mine, to engage in any intrigue or plot that might expose me to danger and disgrace, and I knew they had not done it. I added, that if these men, Bliss and Masterman, were not members of my Legation, the government had its remedy at hand ; it could pursue them as criminals and fugitives, and the writers on international law had prescribed how such characters might be lawfully and properly taken from the house of a minister. It would not be for me to complain that any criminal was taken from my Legation ; but if these accused persons were taken, the responsibility of the act would be upon the government of Paraguay, and not on the minister who had surrendered them believing that he ought not to do so. I also added, that to the specific charge, — referring to the conspiracy to assassinate, — I would not allude, lest again he should thank me for information which I had only derived from him.

At this time we all supposed that something must have been discovered, and we had many discussions in the Legation as to what it might be, or who were the parties implicated in it. We did not believe that Berges was one of them, though we knew that he was accused as one of the principals ; and we were convinced nobody who had been in the Legation knew anything about it. Nor could we believe that any person who had long been a resident of Paraguay would be so stupid, so utterly foolish, as to engage in anything of



that kind with the least hope of success. The system of espionage had always been so thorough, and everybody was in such distrust of everybody else, that no two persons would ever dare to hint of such a thing to each other. If one Paraguayan had ever broached such an idea to another, I care not who the two might have been, he would have been suspected of being a spy set to entrap him, and would have been instantly denounced to the government. In fact, if he had been betrayed into listening to him, it would have been a race between them to see who should denounce the other first. It was the same between families as between neighbors, and the same between neighbors as strangers. No man dared either to speak or to hint anything against Lopez or his government, or to listen to anything of the kind, for it was the duty of every one to denounce, not only the man who thus spoke, but the man who would listen to such words and not report them immediately. Therefore we could not conceive it to be possible, from our knowledge of the country and of the terrible system of espionage which obtained, that any Paraguayans had been concerned in this alleged conspiracy.

But there were a few Argentines who had come into Paraguay since the war began, as fugitives, or to render assistance to Lopez, who, not fully realizing the character of the government, might possibly have been led to attempt some such feat as they were accustomed to perform in their own countries. There was that Colonel Marquez, who has been already mentioned, from Buenos Aires, who had been known as a sort of *caudillo* in his own country, and was a man of some military knowledge and considerable literary attainments. At one time he had written a novel, the subject of which was "The City of the Cæsars," in which he laid the scene of his story principally in that mythical or fabulous place. Indeed, he had held for a long time that there really was such a city, and that the followers of Sebastian Cabot who strayed away from the fort at Espiritu Santo had in fact entered that place, whose existence has since been disputed. He had been engaged in the wars between Buenos



Aires and the other provinces, and had committed some great excesses, for which he was taken prisoner, tried, and condemned to death. He was kept a long time in prison in Buenos Aires, from which, by the connivance of his jailer, he escaped, and reached Paraguay near the commencement of the war. Lopez permitted him to remain there, but gave him no employment, and he had no means of living except by the use of his pen. Men of letters, however, could find no occupation to support them, except in writing panegyrics on Lopez. Marquez, therefore, was accustomed to write, at a stipulated price, the patriotic speeches of the women of Paraguay, to be read at the times when they were ordered by the authorities to assemble and pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to the defence of the liberties of their country, and to support the great, the good, the brave, and the magnanimous Lopez. These speeches Marquez used to write by the score for the poor women, who had to deliver them or get somebody else to read them. He was a soldier of fortune, and though he kept very quiet, it was evident that a man of his nature, situated as he was, could not be very well contented. Besides him, there were several desperadoes who had come from one of the western provinces of the Argentine Republic which had been in revolt. These adventurers were of the worst class of *caudillos*, or gaucho chiefs. The revolution in which they had been engaged having been suppressed, they escaped to Bolivia, and thence came to Paraguay to confer with Lopez, and to devise some plan by which they could make a diversion in their own country or in Bolivia in his favor. Lopez, with his accustomed gratitude to those who came to his rescue, as in the case of Carreras and Manlove, had them all arrested and taken to his head-quarters, and their fate was like that of all the others whom he had arrested, — they were killed, either by exposure and starvation or by torture and execution. These men might very naturally consider the feasibility of a revolution, and it was our suspicion for a time that they had been engaged in sounding certain Paraguayans to ascertain whether they would engage in some-



thing of the kind, and that they had been immediately exposed,—as we knew no Paraguayan would dare to entertain such a project for a moment,—and that that was the whole sum and substance of the conspiracy, if there had been any. Possibly our surmise was correct, but as Marquez and the Argentines were all soon put out of the way, there is no evidence, so far as I know, either for or against it. It was only a suspicion of our own, and had been surmised only when we could devise no other theory or explanation of the strange proceedings which we were witnessing. As was my duty, however, when Benitez had stated in his letter, in an official form, that a plan for the assassination of Lopez had been discovered and frustrated, and that it was but a part of a great plot for a revolution, I requested him to congratulate the President on his escape from it. I believed it all to be a farce, got up expressly as a blind to a terrible tragedy; yet diplomatic forms must be adhered to, though the minister may know that the head of the government to which he is accredited is a traitor, an assassin, and a perjurer, as the whole world has recognized in its deportment to and recognition of another despot more successful than Lopez.

It had been intimated, in several of Benitez's letters, that on the 24th of July, the birthday of the President, the allies were to make a grand movement against the Paraguayan lines, and that at the same time the conspirators in and about Asuncion, Luque, and other places, were to make a demonstration. But the day came and went, and we saw nothing either of conspiracy or conspirators, and heard of no movement on the part of the enemy. On this day it was the custom to have an official reception, and it was expected that all persons holding any public character, as well as all the more prominent citizens, would present themselves at the Governmental House, to offer their felicitations to the President, or, in his absence, to the Vice-President, for the return of that auspicious day in which his Excellency first opened his eyes to illuminate the world. On this occasion I had several reasons for not complying with the custom. I found it would be very difficult to



frame any sort of an address that would not either offend Lopez or choke myself in its delivery. Besides, the very urgent letter of Benitez, of the 23d, required an immediate answer ; and therefore I could not afford the time to go out to Luque, to be present at, or take part in, the disgusting ceremony.

It had long been one of the most difficult duties of my position to attend these receptions. On this occasion it was expected that the deans of the diplomatic and consular bodies would each make an address of congratulation, and also that the chief of each of the departments of the government would do the same. The Paraguayan officials of course could say nothing except in laudation of the great Lopez. Their addresses were made up of such fulsome flattery as must have disgusted any man who had not fed on adulation from childhood. These addresses were virtually Lopez's own productions, for they were all submitted to him beforehand, or in his absence to Benitez, who, in such matters, was his factotum, and if they were not sufficiently fulsome and idolatrous to gratify his inordinate vanity, they were altered to his taste. On previous occasions, when I had attended these receptions, I endeavored to preserve my self-respect, and at the same time not to give offence, by dwelling on the heroic conduct of the Paraguayan people ; to express my sympathy, and my desire that they might soon enjoy that peace and prosperity which their valor and sacrifices had earned ; but I studiously and invariably abstained from any approval of him or his course ; and though I said enough in praise of the Paraguayan people, their valor and their endurance, I was not without misgivings that Lopez would take offence because I had not ascribed all the honor which they had achieved in the war to himself. My continuous refusal, either to flatter him or to say anything in justification of his course during the war, was doubtless one of the causes of his enmity towards me, as he must have observed that, however much I might do or say in behalf of the Paraguayan people, I would not put myself on the record as his champion or defender, and left the way open at all times by which I could, consistently with all that I had previously said or done, expose and denounce his atrocities.



The next day, the 25th, greatly to my surprise,—and, I may add, relief,—I received a visit from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Benitez. Up to that time I had believed that the government had really discovered something of a revolutionary or dangerous character, and that the object it had in view in making so many arrests had been to discover how far it had extended, and who were engaged in it. I had not till then supposed that all which had been done had been but a part of a plan, the object of which was the destruction of all the foreigners in Paraguay, together with the better class of the Paraguayans. I supposed, too, that Benitez must know something of the facts of the case, and that, if there had been anything discovered, he could tell what it was, and who were the parties implicated in it. I took it for granted that by a personal interview I should learn something of what was the real cause of all the strange proceedings that had recently taken place. The only notice I had had that any act offensive to the government had been committed was contained in Benitez's letters, in which he stated that the conspirators were to have made a certain movement, in conjunction with the enemy, on the 24th, and that Bliss and others had signed a paper in which they had pledged themselves to the assassination of Lopez. The latter I knew was false, and I believed the former was. At least the 24th had passed, and no movement had been made. I thought that by a personal interview with Benitez I should learn what the government was seeking to accomplish or find out, and that I should be able to satisfy him that no one about the United States Legation had ever known anything in regard to it. In fact, I hoped that I should be able to impart such information, or give him such assurances, that Carreras, Rodriguez, and Pereira would soon be set at liberty, and perhaps be permitted to return to my house. I invited him into my parlor, and expressed great delight to see him. He said he was very glad to see me, and had come at the request of his Excellency to hold some conversation with me. The man was greatly agitated, and seemed to feel that he had a very difficult and dangerous task to perform.



He had evidently studied over what he intended to say, and proceeded to say it as if he had his lesson by heart. He went on to speak of the great regard that the government of Paraguay had for that of the United States, particularly for its worthy representative who had so long resided in Paraguay; that it had ever endeavored to show the most friendly disposition both to me and to my government, and he hoped to continue to do so. But certain offences had arisen of a very unusual character, which the government was required to meet with promptness and decision; and as I should be able to render great assistance to it in arriving at the truth, and in defeating the machinations of its enemies, he had come to me to speak with entire frankness of the situation, hoping that I should respond with equal frankness, and the government would then be spared the necessity of resorting to certain measures which it was unwilling, and hoped it would be unnecessary, to take. I replied that I was very anxious to know the meaning of certain strange proceedings of which I knew nothing more than what he had advised me in his official letters, and was very desirous of knowing what reasons the government had for the very unusual measures recently taken; and, in the doubt and darkness in which I was, I was disposed to speak with entire freedom, and if anything of a treasonable or criminal nature had been discovered I wanted to know the facts of the case, especially if any one in my house was implicated in it. He then said he wished to ask me if I had not forgotten some things that had occurred, and among others that package of letters which Berges had sent to me. Very undiplomatically, and perhaps imprudently, I became very indignant at this suggestion, and told him, in language somewhat heated, that I had written him on that matter, and had told him the exact truth; that anything of that kind could not be forgotten, and it was not respectful to make any such intimation. I had received from everybody who cared to leave anything in my house whatever they had brought. Multitudes of foreigners and Paraguayans had brought their most valuable articles and deposited them in the Legation.



The room in which we were sitting was half full of trunks and boxes belonging to other people ; in fact, there were three large boxes there belonging to Madam Lynch. They had been sent there at the time when the people were expecting the town would be taken by the allies. The boxes might be filled with treasonable papers ; I did not know, for they were locked or nailed up, and I had not opened them ; but, so far as I knew, there was not a document or paper of any kind that contained anything adverse or unfriendly to the government. I had seen Berges but twice after his return, and it had been probably two weeks after he got back from San Fernando before I even knew that he was in town, and yet he had said in his letter "the day after his return." I took up my journal and showed where I had made entries day after day of what I had done, and what had transpired on the different days, and it appeared that it was the 22d of June when I had first seen Berges after his return, and he had already been, as I had since learned, several weeks in his house. I called, as a matter of courtesy, to see him, then proceeded to see the Lady President (Lopez's mother), and then to the house of Leite Pereira, whence I brought a quantity of Paraguayan paper money ; that Berges had never said a word against the government, never alluded to any conspiracy at that time or the only other time at which I had seen him for several months. Benitez was evidently surprised and frightened at the answer I made. He said he regretted very much that the friendly effort of the government to arrange a matter of a delicate and difficult nature had been met by me in such a way, and therefore it would be compelled to put into the correspondence what it had no wish to make public, and to take entirely different steps from what it had intended. I told him I could not help that ; the government must pursue its own policy. I could give him no further information than I had already given ; I knew nothing more than I had heard from him of any revolution, or any action hostile to the government. He said that the government was already well informed of all that had trans-



pired, and that it was not so much to obtain further information that he had come to see me, as that the President might carry out his purposes without resorting to measures which he hoped would not be necessary. I understood from this that the government would take violent measures towards me, unless I should accede to his demands and deliver up papers which, to the best of my knowledge and belief, never had any existence. I told him that the government could take whatever course it saw fit; as for me, I had nothing more to say in the matter. He said, "*Sabemos todo*" ("We know all"); "We are informed already of what has transpired here in this house; of the conversations, the toasts given, and all the transactions within these premises." I said: "Whatever people may have told you, if there has been anybody here who has reported such things, it is false. I know nothing about them, only that nothing of the kind ever transpired here." He said he was very sorry his friendly visit had no better result; that they had before known all about what they wanted to learn directly from me, and therefore he had come in that friendly way to me to save his government from the necessity of taking measures of an extraordinary character. I told him that I regretted he had been so misinformed, but, as he was seeking for impossibilities, there was no remedy that I could see, and off he went. It may be here stated that Benitez was subsequently arrested, tortured, and executed for the unfortunate expression, "*Sabemos todo*," used in this interview. Lopez pretended that this was an admission that he knew something which he had never revealed. He knew all, while the government was not informed of many things; therefore it was clear he was one of the conspirators and my accomplice. Away with him!

I immediately conferred with Bliss and Masterman in regard to this interview, and told them, as nearly as I could, the conversation which had occurred. It rendered our situation more dark and hopeless than ever. Evidently Lopez was determined to proceed to extremities against the Legation. They were fully of my opinion, and from that time we were



expecting, for a few days more anxiously than ever, to have the Legation violated, and for them to be taken away by force. They had their carpet-bags ready, so that, in case of a descent upon the Legation, they could be taken without any delay; for they did not suppose that if the police entered they would be allowed a single moment to prepare themselves for departure, or to gather up anything they might need as prisoners.

With the clouds thus gathering around us, we discussed our situation as it might be supposed that condemned convicts would discuss the probabilities of a reprieve after they had been notified that they were to be executed on the next day. We believed that there were but two possible chances of our escape: the one was, that, ere the Legation had been violated, a gunboat should come to our relief; and the other was that the torpid Brazilians might move against Lopez and destroy him before he had destroyed us. The latter we regarded about as probable as that he might be struck by lightning in the mean time. It was time, we knew, for a gunboat to return; why it did not we had no means of knowing. Having learned that a new admiral was in command of the South Atlantic Squadron, that fact gave us some hope; for we were well aware that if Admiral Godon had been there, and had known that I and my family were in personal danger, he would have gone off in the opposite direction rather than send a gunboat to our relief. Of the new admiral we had no knowledge, but the presumption was that he must be better than the old one. We considered, also, that my chance of escape was very much better than that of either Bliss or Masterman, as, if they were seized, it would not be until some days, perhaps weeks, afterwards that he would be ready to seize me, Mrs. Washburn, and the other members of my family, and in the mean time the Wasp might return after they had been seized and before he had taken us. Thus our prospect of escape was better than theirs, as they would be taken first, and every day gained would improve our chances. That a gunboat must come within a month or two we regarded as



certain ; it might come within a day, and it might not come before several weeks. A day under those circumstances was an important item, and we considered that every possible device to prevent Lopez from violating the Legation might properly be taken.

But the days, the terrible days ! Bliss and Masterman regarded themselves as lost. The chances seemed to be at least twenty to one against them. Ever since the charge of conspiracy or of the attempt at assassination had been made, we were convinced that the fate of Rodriguez, Carreras, and Pereira was sealed ; that they would be, if they had not already been, tortured and put to death ; and that if Bliss and Masterman fell into the hands of Lopez, they must suffer the same fate. Every day each of them gave me what might be considered as final messages, requesting that, if I should escape and they should not, I would vindicate them before the world, and see that my government avenged them. Bliss made his will, which I still retain, and from which I make the following quotation : —

“ Being accused of conspiracy by the Paraguayan government, which has denied me a passport to leave the country with the American Legation, to which I belong, and that government having declared that it will put me on trial, I declare myself completely innocent of the charge made against me, or of any other offence against the government of Paraguay ; and I call upon my own government to institute a full investigation of the unexampled circumstances of the case, and to exact a fitting indemnity, should the proceedings against me result in my death.”

These anxious days were a sort of eternity. The dread of another letter from Benitez was constantly haunting us, for we had no doubt that the next would be worse than the last, and we greatly feared that it would precede but a few moments their arrest. But the most desolate and heart-stricken of all was poor Mrs. Leite Pereira. At first she had hoped that nothing serious would befall her husband ; that though doubtless he would be subjected to very severe treatment, and perhaps half starved to death, yet, as she knew he had never



done anything against Lopez or against Paraguay, and as there could be nothing against him, she still hoped that his life would be spared. But the rumors which we heard from below, together with Benitez's letters, which she insisted upon reading, nearly destroyed her every hope, and she went about the house like one who could not be comforted. She was ever talking of José Maria (her husband), and ever trying to devise some way by which she could placate Lopez or do something for her husband's relief. She would propose one day to write to Madam Lynch, another day to write to the President; again she would request that I should write to him and tell him that her husband was not guilty of anything, and then suggest that I should write something of a threatening character; then she would call to mind that on a certain occasion she had been one of the leaders of a patriotic demonstration, that she had given a great deal of money for presents to his Excellency, and that she had shown always a good and friendly spirit, and that her husband had done the same. Then she would propose to send him a box of provisions, and request me to get permission to have it sent below. With these latter requests I would comply, and several boxes were sent from my house to the police station to be taken to head-quarters for him, though I had little faith that he would ever know that they had been sent, or receive any of their contents.

It was a relief when darkness closed upon us, for after that hour we never received any letters; but the nights were so long and sleepless, it was a greater relief for the day to dawn, and long before that time I would be up and open the front door and take a look out to see if the messenger with a letter was not approaching. Most people know what it is to fall asleep with some weight or trouble upon the mind, and the disagreeable sensation of first awakening with a vague impression of trouble, and feeling a load upon the stomach before they can sufficiently collect their thoughts to recollect the cause of it distinctly. This was my experience for months; a brief sleep for a couple of hours was all that the



anxieties of the time would permit. Then I would lie awake and reflect on what would probably be the incidents of the day; what would the next letter contain? would Bliss and Masterman be seized that day? and if so, how many days would pass before I should be obliged to follow them? when would the Wasp arrive? how many days had passed since she left for Montevideo? why had she not come before? perhaps she will not come; perhaps the admiral has decided not to send her until he gets further instructions from home; how many months will that take? if that has been his course, she will not return for two or three months more, and that will certainly be too late to save us. These reflections would wear away the rest of the night until nearly daylight, and then I would get up, and, after taking my bath, light a cigar and walk up and down my inner corridor, again speculating upon our situation and what was before us. I endeavored as much as possible to disguise my apprehensions and to conceal my fears both from Mrs. Washburn and Mrs. Pereira. To the latter I always pretended to believe that, as Lopez could have nothing against her husband, he would not put him to death, but that she would see him again. To Mrs. Washburn I endeavored to maintain an appearance of indifference, and would tell her that as for me and her and our little child we were perfectly secure. Lopez would never dare to seize and execute the minister of a great and powerful nation, for he would know that the United States would follow him up and, cost what it might, would, sooner or later, have his head. These efforts, however, were but partially successful. She knew I had asked for my passports, had not received them, and could not get away, and suspected the reason of my detention, and, in spite of all my assumed confidence, could not but sometimes give way to despair and say that Lopez meant to kill us all, that not one of us would ever leave the country alive.

But with Bliss and Masterman, who fully realized the situation, it was useless to attempt to disguise the fact that Lopez was resolved on the destruction of us all, and that he was seeking to escape the consequences of his acts by rendering



our names and memories infamous. They knew as well as I did that Lopez had it in his power to destroy us all, that he could make it appear to the world that some accident had happened to such of us as he feared to kill openly, and that he could have all of the witnesses put out of the way so that no account of our taking off, except his own, would ever reach the outer world. That such was his plan we had abundant reason for believing, and every letter from Benitez rendered it more evident, and the day of its execution more near. He did not believe the Wasp would return. We did. To gain time was everything.



## CHAPTER XXV.

Correspondence with Benitez. — Berge's Imaginary Papers again demanded. — Threats. — The Object of Benitez's Visit. — Accusations of Berge. — Commander Kirkland accused of forwarding Letters from Caxias. — Notice that Bliss and Masterman will be taken. — Passports. — Theory of Berge's Declaration. — Its Evident Falsehoods. — Carreras's Declaration. — Its Inexplicable Mixture of Truth and Falsehoods. — John F. Gowland. — The *Semanario*. — Its Sanguinary Contents. — Its Denunciations of Traitors. — The President's Birthday celebrated at the New Capital. — The Women denounce their Husbands, Brothers, and Sons. — Great Enthusiasm. — The Peace not disturbed in the General Joy.

UNTIL this time, in the whole correspondence, no accusation had been made against myself, nor had there been any intimation that I had known anything of the conspiracy, or been in any way a party to the plans of the conspirators. It had invariably been represented that they had imposed upon my confidence and abused my hospitality, and that having done so it was my duty to dismiss them from my house. On the 31st of July I received another letter from Benitez, in which he went into a long argument to show that I could not rightfully and legally maintain that Bliss and Masterman were members of my Legation. The letter was long, as most of his letters were, and had several quotations from different writers on international law to support his position ; but the sum and substance of his argument was this: We know they are criminals, and we have told you so, and you therefore know it. This government always does justice, and always shows great respect for the laws of nations, and is greatly surprised that you should give shelter in your Legation to persons who, after committing great crimes, are merely refugees in your Legation, having no right to its immunities. He added: "It is to be regretted that such individuals still remain in



your house, protected by the American flag, since your Excellency cannot but admit, upon your own conviction, that, far from being members of your Legation, they are improperly housed in it ; and as you know and have declared that your hotel ought not to serve as an asylum to criminals, I again demand of you the fulfilment of this duty, urgently required by justice and law." He also endeavored to prove that my action had been inconsistent, and that, as I had sent away others, I ought also to send away Bliss and Masterman, utterly ignoring the fact that I had sent away nobody, and had officially notified the government to that effect, and that all who had left had done so of their own accord, while having my full permission to remain. The letter then goes on to state the great consideration which had been shown me in the visit of Benitez, and the strong desire manifested by such visit to continue the friendly relations, the style of which consideration may be inferred from the following extract from the letter : —

"Your Excellency will remember that I then said that I had left my post to come and visit you, and inform you in a friendly manner that I considered the ground you had taken in the official correspondence as very serious, and that I desired I might not be obliged to say in it things which I wished to avoid for your own honor, Mr. Minister, and that I should be obliged to do so to prove officially the reasons which the government has for being exigent with you in the pending questions.

"I also said that I knew that you had received from Berge papers with certain precautions and declarations, and labelled them with your own hand, and that I attributed only to forgetfulness what you said in your note concerning this matter ; adding that I should infinitely regret to be obliged to make use of the declarations of the criminals in official notes, since that would carry this ministry upon a ground which it has not wished to enter upon with you, Mr. Minister."

He then proceeds to give the substance of the conversation between us, and says, "You ought to understand that we are in possession of even your confidential communications with



the criminals from a very early period, and that we did not wish to state this in notes, at least not in all its fulness, unless we should be obliged to do so." He also said that when he requested me to appeal to my memory in regard to those papers, that I "lost my temper, and replied that it was false, that there was no such thing, that whoever had so stated had stated a falsehood, a lie."

The visit of Benitez perplexed me more than anything else that had transpired. If there were no conspiracy, as I soon became convinced there never had been, why should he be sent to me on such an errand? why demand papers which Lopez knew had no existence? If Berges had ever made any statement of the kind, the words had first been put into his mouth, and he had been compelled by torture to say it, and Lopez could never have been so utterly daft as to believe in them. Why, then, had he sent Benitez to insult me by telling me that they knew I had received them and were informed of their purport, when he did not believe that they ever had an existence? The mystery was getting utterly impenetrable. There was only one explanation that could be given: he was weaving a network to justify himself in our destruction.

And yet, at that time, I did not fully realize the fact. We were all of us in such a state of doubt as to what had and what had not been discovered, that it seemed as if nothing could surprise us more than what had already taken place. The closing part of this last letter, therefore, was scarcely more startling than what had preceded, though it contained the declaration that ex-Minister Berges had stated before the tribunal that I had been his accomplice in a conspiracy. It said that Berges, in his declaration before the tribunal, had said that he had received an original letter from the Marques de Caxias, commander-in-chief of the allies, which letter had been received through the United States Legation, and his answer had been sent by the same channel, the draught of which was to be found in the package that he had delivered to me. There was one statement in this pretended declaration of Berges that gave us a ray of hope; at least it would be evi-



dence that there was no conspiracy if all the persons accused of being parties to it should be destroyed. In this declaration Berges was made to say that when the Wasp came it brought him another letter from Caxias, dated on the 1st of June, but which he did not receive till July, when it was delivered to him at his house by me after his return from San Fernando. This statement inculpated Commander Kirkland, as well as myself, as being a party to the conspiracy, for all the letters from the Wasp had been forwarded by him, and, with the exception of the one letter sent to Vasconcellos on his first arrival, nothing had been sent except Kirkland's own brief letters to me. Lopez had already begun to publish this correspondence, and if an investigation were ever to be had by our government, as doubtless would be the case if he should carry out his intention of allowing none of us to escape, then Kirkland would be a witness for us. He could testify, not only that Caxias never sent a message or letter through him to anybody in Paraguay, but that he entertained the most unfriendly feelings towards me personally, and had prevented him from coming through to my relief or rescue. This letter which Berges says was brought by the Wasp was not, according to the same declaration, replied to, for the reason that the ex-Minister was unable to write on account of a lame hand, and that I had assisted him to fold it up and place it with the other documents; that I took the package, sealed it, and labelled it "Papers of Berges," and took them away with me to my house. And he continues:—

"And Berges himself adds, in his second declaration, that it was, in fact, at the time of the first visit which you made him at his house in Salinares, about the middle of the afternoon, that you personally carried him the second letter written by Caxias to him, when you said: 'These papers came by the gunboat Wasp, and I received them under cover to me; it would seem that they are of importance.' That Berges took them and said, 'Let us see,' reading them, thereupon, in your presence; and that after a short time you observed to him that the papers were long, and that therefore you would retire, as you had something to do; that to this he replied, 'I shall claim



a little more of your time, you might take a walk for a little while in the quinta.' That you said, 'Your quinta is very sorry at present, rather give me a book to read.' That he then said to you, 'There are some,' pointing to a few books upon a small table, such as the 'Count of Monte-Christo,' 'La Garrota,' a work by Ascasubi, etc. That you got up to take one of them, he does not know exactly which, and read awhile, until Berges interrupted you, saying 'I am going to deposit these papers in your custody'; to which you replied, '*Vaya!* they are then from Caxias,' and he replied in the affirmative. You said to him, 'These are delicate matters; I would prefer to take charge of jewelry or other things which you may wish to deposit in the Legation, and I would do it without asking the so-much per cent (without saying how much) which I ask from other persons, but these papers may involve me in a compromise with my own government for abetting correspondence with the enemy's camp; for the rest I have no fear.' Berges then replied, 'How can a thing be known which has passed between us? I will fold them up with the previous communication (which you knew of), and give them to you now to carry away.' That you, after thinking a moment, said, 'I will take them, but, if anything should happen, I will burn them, and say I have received nothing.' That Berges then got up and took from a secret place in a red writing-desk, where he kept it, the first letter and the reply to it, and set about folding it up with the second one and the accompanying papers, as he had said in his before-mentioned previous declaration; the form of the package being quadrangular, about the size of a sheet folded in three, and having been closed with a wafer by Berges himself, you labelled it with the inscription already mentioned, 'Papeles de Berges,' and put it in the inside pocket of your coat over your breast, taking leave of him afterwards, and starting off in the direction of the Trinidad. That about a week afterwards you visited him a second time, along with your lady, who remained in the parlor, and you went into Berges's sleeping-room, he being in bed, on which occasion it was that you made him in more detail the offer of your services as minister and as friend.

"These are, Mr. Minister, the foundations which this ministry has had for soliciting of your Excellency the delivery of the package mentioned by the ex-Minister Berges."

What could I make of a statement of this kind? There



was a particularity of description, a minuteness of detail, calculated to carry conviction, and worthy of any Jesuit who ever sat in judgment in the holy Inquisition. Had Berges made up that story, made it all up with a view to screen himself, or had it all been instigated by Lopez, assisted by his bishop and his holy inquisitor, Padre Maiz and Madam Lynch? It occurred to me that Berges had, perhaps, endeavored to communicate with Caxias, and, being detected, had endeavored to conciliate Lopez by inculpating me, and had thought that by so doing the action of Lopez would be delayed, that his life might be prolonged, possibly, until the advance of the allies might, by the destruction of Lopez, liberate him. But it was all surmise. All we knew for a certainty was that it was fictitious from beginning to end, but who had concocted it, and for what object, we could only imagine. However, in replying to it, I could not tell Benitez that Lopez had invented the whole story, and that it was a part of his plan to justify himself in the butchery of persons who were obnoxious to him; I could only declare that there was no truth in it, and that the person who had made it had been guilty of atrocious falsehoods. In concluding this letter, Benitez said that his government had never avoided the responsibility of its acts, of whatever character, and would not hesitate to assume it before the world by making use of the means prescribed by the writers upon international law to take possession of the criminals Porter C. Bliss and George F. Masterman. We regarded this as a notice that they were to be taken, and again for several days were in hourly expectation of seeing the police enter to seize them.

The question with me now was, What answer should I make to this last letter of Benitez? The government had never before accused me directly, or brought any charge against me further than that I had sheltered criminals; it had never said that I had any knowledge of their guilty plans. My first impulse was to return the note as insulting, tell Mr. Benitez to send me no more, that I would not receive them, and peremptorily demand my passports and the means of leaving the country.



But I had learned long before that, in the case of the Brazilian Minister, Vianna de Lima, that passports were of little avail unless the means of leaving the country were provided. I had already asked them, and they had not been given me ; and if now I were to demand them again, and refuse to hold further correspondence with the government, I should only precipitate a crisis, when everything depended on delay. I had no hope of getting out of the country until a gunboat came, whether I received the passports or not ; and if they were sent me I should be forced to leave Asuncion, though it would have been impossible for me to get out of Paraguay. The plan of Lopez was to manufacture such evidence of the conspiracy as would justify him in the eyes of other nations for his extreme measures, the climax of which will appear hereafter. What I immediately most feared was that my Paraguayan servant, on whom I was dependent for obtaining provisions, would be taken away from me, or would be ordered by the police to voluntarily withdraw from my service. Then we should all be exposed to starvation, or compelled to leave Asuncion and go into the interior, in which case I knew the moment I left my house Bliss and Masterman would be seized, and what our fate would be could only be conjectured. It was more probable, however, that Lopez would not wait to drive us from the capital before seizing these two marked victims ; and they both implored me not to break off formal relations with the government, as it would certainly precipitate their fate. Perhaps a steamer would come the next day, certainly it would come soon. By answering that letter at length I could, unless they were seized in the mean while, gain at least a week, and it would be several days before they could answer all the points of so long a letter as I would write ; and though it might conclude with a notice that they were to be taken at a certain hour, unless previously delivered up, it was not improbable that the Wasp would return before that time. This was our only hope, for we had ceased to expect anything more from the Brazilians. It seemed to us as though it was their policy to give Lopez time to exterminate



the whole Paraguayan people, and I was well aware it would be pleasing to Caxias if I were to share their fate. After mature deliberation, therefore, I set myself to answer a letter which under other circumstances I should have returned with indignation and scorn.

In my answer, which was dated August 3, as I could not state my belief that the declaration of Berges was a tissue of falsehoods made up by Lopez and his inquisitors, I assumed that Berges himself had made the statements which had been imputed to him ; I took them up in detail and reviewed them, stating with great particularity everything that had occurred, and particularly in reference to any correspondence that had been sent from my Legation through the military lines. I had only received one letter for many months for anybody but myself, and that was the one to the Portuguese Vice-Consul, Vasconcellos, of which I have previously given an account. If, therefore, anything from Caxias had been received through my hands it had been in that package, but I had no knowledge of any such contents. I stated that the declaration of Berges was all false from beginning to end, and my theory was that he had ascribed to me a part which was performed by some other person ; that I did not consider he was a person of sufficient ingenuity to make up such a story out of nothing, but that perhaps he had had some such dealings with another party, and to screen that party he might have ascribed it to me ; that perhaps he had done that, not out of malice to me, for I had no reason to suppose he cherished any, but he was obliged to accuse somebody, and thinking that my official character would prevent scrutiny into my acts, he had thus sought to shield some friend ; but whether or no this was a correct supposition, his story was in all its parts a monstrous fiction. I said also, that until I had received the letter I had been groping in the dark, without any idea of what the government knew or suspected, but that this declaration of Berges had let in a flood of light upon the whole transaction ; for if a man who had held his high position had accused me of being his accomplice, there was good rea-



son why the government should regard me and all about me with suspicion. I then went on to show from the dates that it was impossible his statements could be true ; that I had always refused to send any despatches for him when I was obliged to avail myself of the courtesy of the allies to forward them through the military lines, as that would be an act of bad faith which, if discovered, would justify them in refusing to allow any more of my correspondence to pass either way ; that I had sometimes sent some family letters for private individuals, which I had been assured contained nothing political, and if Berges had ever sent through the Legation any correspondence, it must have been under cover of other persons. I then recapitulated what had transpired between Berges and myself at the interview of which he pretended to give an account, and added : " All that Berges says in his declaration about my giving him a letter from Caxias, and waiting for him to read it, of my taking up a book to read, and the conversation that passed between us, the taking of papers from a secret place in the writing-desk, folding and labelling the papers, is every word of it false, — as false as false can be." I also said that, during the only two interviews I had with him, his doors were open, and his servants were passing in and out and could have seen anything going on, and on neither occasion did Berges leave his bed.

As cumulative evidence that his other declarations were false, I alluded to the one in which he had said that, while I preferred not to receive his papers, I would receive his jewels and other valuables without charging the same per cent or commission that I had charged others. That this was a pure and malicious invention was evident from the fact, that though I had received, since the time of the evacuation of the town, money and other valuables from a great many people, I had never asked or received any commission, percentage, or compensation, and that such a remark to Berges was absurd upon its face ; that not only had I no knowledge of what he charged against me, but I could not believe that I could have had in my house for nearly five months persons



with whom I was on the most intimate terms and all whose thoughts I ought to have known, yet who were at the same time engaged in a plot against the government without my suspecting it; and that I cherished the hope that a full investigation would show that the Legation had never given shelter to any such persons, but if such there were, they had grossly abused my confidence and hospitality, and it was not for me to ask for their pardon, but rather for their punishment.

The next letter from Benitez, dated the 6th of August, was still longer, and indeed too long for any synopsis of its contents to be given here. This letter put me at a great disadvantage in argument, as I found that Lopez could manufacture his facts as needed, and I could not gainsay them. His witnesses, whom I had indorsed as honorable, truthful men, had admitted before the "solemn tribunal" they were guilty of high crimes. True I had only his word for it that they had done so, but I could not tell him in an official despatch that he lied, or that, if they had made the admissions alleged, they must have done so under torture, as I knew them to be false. I had stated in my letter to Benitez, on the day when Carreras and Rodriguez left my house, that I was fully persuaded they were innocent of any offence against the government, bespeaking for them kind treatment and that consideration due to their high social character and the honorable positions which they had held in their own government. In this letter Benitez alludes to that fact by saying that it will be very painful to me to learn "that the persons whose honorable character and purity of sentiment you so much vaunted in your note of the 13th of July now appear before the tribunal, not only as fully acquainted with your sentiments, tendencies, and intentions, but also as having been supported by your Excellency in a directly contrary sense, as may be judged from their own words as communicated to me by the court of justice." He then goes on to give what he calls "the solemn declaration" of Carreras before the tribunal, in which the unhappy man is made to give the details of the conspiracy almost as minutely as had Berges given the account of my interviews with him,



and to say that while he and Rodriguez were in the Legation we had a great many conversations about the conspiracy, the means by which it was to be effected, and the time when, in conjunction with the allies, it was to have broken out. With these things which were false were combined statements which I had really made, — as that I was disgusted with the slow progress of the allies, and that it seemed as though they did not intend to conquer the Paraguayans, but to exterminate them ; to move against them without fighting until they should be completely destroyed through exhaustion. This satisfied me that Carreras had been put to the torture, for even those things which I had said he would never have divulged except he had considered them of no importance, and not even then unless in the extremities of suffering. But there was one statement in this “declaration” of Carreras which led me to believe that he had made some statements voluntarily. It was this, that on the 28th of April he sent a letter to Caxias, under cover to John F. Gowland, in Buenos Aires, and that I sent it under my official seal, knowing that it contained the letter to Caxias. Recalling the circumstances of sending away my despatches of the 28th of April, I recollected that Carreras had written a letter, which he said contained nothing except allusions to his own affairs, — nothing political whatever ; and he also said that his friends were advised never to send anything of a political nature to him, and nothing that was not favorable to the cause of Lopez ; and that he was always cautious to do the same thing. This letter, however, he said, as a matter of prudence, he could send to his friend, John F. Gowland, who was a great friend to the Paraguayan cause, and one with whom Lopez would not regard it a crime to correspond. But how should Lopez know that Carreras had ever sent such a letter, unless he had told him so ? And if he had told one thing which otherwise would not have been known, perhaps he had said a great many things, and detailed a great many of my remarks in which I had severely condemned the conduct of Lopez in the prosecution of the war,



and spoken of him generally very much as I have in this book. In my mind I did Carreras injustice at that time. It did not occur to me then that my despatches on that occasion had been stopped and opened by Lopez, and this letter of Carreras taken therefrom; but afterwards it was all clear to me. Lopez having got possession of the letter to his family, and having learned that he had sent it under cover to Gowland, forced him to put in his declaration the statement that there was also a letter to Caxias, when of all the persons in Buenos Aires to whom any one would have intrusted a letter to Caxias, or to any one favorable to the cause of the Brazilians, this John F. Gowland was the last. In fact, he was an exile at that time because of his extreme opposition to Brazil, to the alliance, and to the government then in power in Montevideo. To the declaration of Carreras was added another from Vasconcellos, the Portuguese Vice-Consul, in which he stated that he had received a large package of letters from me, which he had delivered to sundry people, who were, all of them, his fellow-conspirators. Additional statements were also given in this letter from Berges, in which he made the same complaints that Lopez himself had made to me long before: that I had not shown proper zeal in behalf of Paraguay with my own government, having always been unfriendly to it; and when I went to the camp of the Marques de Caxias to treat in regard to peace, I was not favorably disposed towards Lopez, and when I returned I had even a worse disposition than when I went. Among my other offences I was charged with being a very intimate friend of the ex-Consul of France, M. Cochelet, who was always hostile to the government of Paraguay, and lamenting that he had been succeeded by a man of so disagreeable a character as M. Cuberville, his successor. To all these accusations of holding opinions which it did not suit Lopez to permit the minister of a foreign government to entertain, Berges added that he believed I was under pay of the Brazilian government, and that as I had never received any such inducements to friendship from the Paraguayans, I therefore had



“worked against the interests of this country and endeavored to produce discouragement among its sons.” There were also a great many general conversations which he represented that he had held with me, most of which were entirely new to me, and with which it is not worth while to lumber up more of this work. This note, containing these stupendous declarations, closed, as they nearly all did, with another request that I should send Bliss and Masterman away.

During these anxious days we waited with great interest the appearance of the *Semanario*. The days of its publication were very uncertain, though it was always dated on Saturday, notwithstanding it was scarcely ever issued till several days later. No allusion had been made in it to the correspondence which had been going on between Benitez and myself until the issue of July 19, which was not published until the 24th. This number contained the whole correspondence up to the 28th of June, and its appearance in that form was regarded by us as a favorable indication ; for whatever might happen to us, it was improbable that some numbers of the *Semanario* would not be preserved and their contents made known outside the limits of Paraguay ; and I knew that my words would outweigh a thousand times all the evidence that Lopez could extort from witnesses whom he was torturing, and would kill to make sure that they should not afterwards contradict it. The editorials of this paper grew more and more sickening and grandiloquent in their praises of Lopez as his deeds became more sanguinary, and they were repeated so often that it caused us to wonder at the flexibility of a language which would permit the same ideas and sentiments to be reproduced so many times in such varied phraseology. The correspondence from head-quarters, however, usually contained something from which we could judge more or less of the progress of the war ; and this, in fact, was the only part of the paper to which we attached much importance. Those letters from the army, when taken in connection with the threats made against Bliss and Masterman, and the “declarations” against me, were certainly not of a cheer-



ing character. By this time we knew that nearly all our friends and acquaintances had been arrested, and while we were hoping that something would yet happen to avert the destruction which Lopez had prepared for them, the *Semanario* of August 8, 1868, appeared, containing a long letter from the army, which, if not written, was evidently dictated, by Lopez himself. All the writers and correspondents around him had seen others, who but a few weeks before were in as high favor as themselves, arrested as traitors and put to the torture, and knew that at any moment they were liable to the same fate. Sooner or later they were all to follow those whom they now denounced. The native Paraguayans who were accused of treason and conspiracy against the great Lopez were thus dismissed to infamy by the correspondent : —

“These accursed sons of Cain, these reprobates who might have enjoyed incomparable glory as being natives of the same soil as the GREAT LOPEZ, as being the sons of this classic land, blessed by God and admired by the universe, of this land which for its virtues and its glories has no equal in the world, so that its name alone, the Paraguayan name alone, is the light which frightens tyrants and puts them to flight, and arouses even in the farthest corners of the earth applause, envy, and hope ; who, having had it in their power to record their names in the great sum total of the Paraguayan people, which will live eternally with inextinguishable splendor amid the blessings of posterity, have renounced this glory and the eternal home of the blessed, have gone down to Hell, taking with them the wrath of God, the anathema of the whole society, and the malediction, horror, and eternal indignation of their country.”

The fate of the foreigners, according to this correspondent, was little better than that of the accused natives. The latter had already been despatched and sent to their final account. The former were soon to follow them.

“These foreigners who found on Paraguayan soil what they could not obtain in their own native lands, who were but leeches fattening upon the people’s honey, who enriched themselves with the precious fruit of the sweat and the blood of the people, who, while the



people has been consecrating itself as a whole upon the altars of patriotism, making the greatest sacrifices, and bathing heroically with its blood the tree of liberty, and shielding with their lives the sanctuary of their religion and of their sacred rights, enjoyed not only all the benefits of a full state of peace, but also the advantages derived from the fact of all the natives being engaged in the service of their country, and who, O, horrible infamy! perverse degeneration of the human heart!—these Furies in human form who have come to take possession of our houses and our goods, to enjoy a peace of which we are deprived, and which we guaranteed to them with our blood and our sacrifices, are the persons who, as their only mode of payment, have whetted the knife upon our very altars to assassinate the providential man whom God has given us to free us from the slavery of captivity and of the Devil! the Father and Saviour of the land, the greatest and most endeared object of our existence, and consequently to assassinate our country, our sacrifices, our glories, our all; to do us all the evil which the barbarous and infernal enemy has not been able to do for himself, and a still greater evil, since, whatever may be the enemy, not merely that which we now hold impotent and prostrate at our feet, but any other enemy, even stronger and more powerful, shall never tread the conquered Republic of Paraguay, shall never destroy her by despoiling her of her anchor of salvation and of hope, her loved and beloved MARSHAL, and shall never cause her to drag the vile chains of slavery; but these infamous ingrates, these traitors toward God, toward humanity and ourselves, these seeds of corruption which have sought to germinate in the heart of our unsuspecting society, shall expiate their horrid crime, and there shall not remain any further vestiges of them than the malediction which will eternally persecute them. . . .

“Thanks to God and to MARSHAL LOPEZ! the Paraguayan people is to-day cured of the cancer which gangrened its existence. Confidence, tranquillity, and fraternity recover their immovable seat among us. Who can conquer us? Nobody! GOD and MARSHAL LOPEZ are with us!”

What an alliance!

The news from the new capital, Luque, was of the most gloomy character. On the 24th of July, Lopez's birthday, all the men, of whom there were not more than twenty left, and



all the women, were called together to protest against the treason of their relations and late associates. They did so, according to the *Semanario*, in the following terms:—

1st. The people as a body solemnly protests against the horrible crime of the traitors against their country.

2d. The people declares solemnly before God and the world that it does not participate in any manner in the said treason, &c., &c., &c.

The signers of this manifesto (headed by Canon Bogado, Minister Benitez, and Judge Ortellado) were themselves accused of treason before many weeks, and most of their names figure in the bloody pages of Resquin's Diary, along with the persons whose treason is protested against.

At the end of this document is the characteristic paragraph which follows: "At this stage of procedure several persons belonging to the families of the state criminals solicited urgently and repeatedly to be allowed to sign the foregoing act, which they did." The unfortunate wives of several of the recent victims were thus compelled to append their signatures to a denunciation of their husbands' crimes, which they well knew to be fictitious! They signed their *maiden names*, thus repudiating their husbands for the future. A large number of women also signed, whose husbands were not yet accused of treason, but were destined to become victims in a few more days. The first four signers were the wives of Colonel Fernandez and of Colonel Martinez, the sister of the Bishop, and the wife of Minister Benitez. As will be seen elsewhere, Señora Martinez was herself destined to become the most diabolical instance of the fiendishly protracted tortures of Lopez.

The fear and consternation that prevailed in Luque on that day, as the Italian Consul afterwards told me, were beyond description. Scores of the most respectable women in the country were there, whose husbands had been dragged away, they knew not for what offence, to probable torture and death. Many women had been taken in the same manner, and no greater misery could have been depicted on the faces of those



who were left, had they been warned that the morrow was to be the day of their own execution.

Yet the *Semanario*, in giving an account of the proceedings of that day, said that the enthusiasm was unbounded. The women had come forward and denounced their traitorous husbands, brothers, and sons, and pledged themselves anew to support their protector, the unparalleled warrior, Marshal Lopez. Notwithstanding the great enthusiasm and hilarity, it added that the best of order prevailed, and no violation of the peace occurred to mar the joy and festivities of that happy day.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

Lopez's Opinion of American Admirals. — Benitez's Letters inexplicable. — Publication of the Correspondence. — Berges in the Double Character of Traitor and Patriot. — Letter from Berges and Reply thereto. — The Status of Bliss and Masterman. — Rights of Legation. — Solitude of Asuncion. — Houses sealed up. — Fate of their Owners. — Fernandez and Sanabria. — A Long Silence. — Arrest of Benitez. — His Character. — Madam Lynch withdraws her Treasures from the Legation. — Effects of Protracted Anxiety. — Death the Least of the Terrors. — Lopez and Lynch have their Plans matured. — The American Minister and Wife to be subjected to the same Treatment as the Brothers and Sisters of Lopez. — Details of the Plan. — Causes of Lopez's Antipathy. — His Indecent Exhibitions of himself. — Testimony of Dr. William Stewart.

THE savage and blood-thirsty tone of these articles in the *Semanario*, whenever any allusion was made to the conspiracy, the oburgations of those wicked men who had been engaged in it, with the assurance that they had been, or would be, sent to keep company with the spirits of the damned, rendered it more certain than ever to our minds that if Bliss and Masterman were taken they would be subjected to torture and an ignominious death. Lopez was now exulting in his power to terrify, torture, and kill. His naturally cruel disposition was revelling in the delights of creating the intensest misery. The terrors of the situation were greatly increased by our conviction that there was no conspiracy. Had we believed there had been anything of the kind, we should have deplored the folly of those engaged in it, and supposed that, after they had been put out of the way, others who knew nothing about it would be left unmolested. But being assured that scores of others had been executed for no other reason, as we believed, than to afford a pastime to Lopez, there was no hope left to us unless the Brazilians



in the mean time should make a movement and derange his plans, or a gunboat should appear. Therefore, as each event in succession intensified our anxiety for the arrival of the gunboat, did we the more often estimate the days that must pass before her probable return. Lopez evidently did not think she would return at all. The independence and insolence of Admiral Godon in refusing to give me any assistance in reaching Paraguay until positively so ordered to do by the government, and his going unrebuked afterwards, was sufficient to convince him that, in the American service, naval commanders were quite independent of the home government. He had seen how the Brazilians had persuaded Godon to delay, and how Kirkland had been induced to turn back, though urged by the Minister to force the blockade; and as it was clear that the Brazilians would try and prevent another gunboat from passing above their squadron, Lopez was confident that none would do so for months, and in the mean while he would have abundant time to weave his meshes around us, and manufacture all the testimony required to justify him in the extreme measures he was intending to take.

In only one point was his reasoning or calculations fallacious. As subsequent events proved, had the whole matter of sending the gunboat been left to Admiral Davis, the successor of Godon, it would not have been sent for weeks, perhaps months later, and would never have reached Paraguay till Lopez had made away with all whom it was sent to relieve. But the United States had a Minister at Rio de Janeiro of different stuff from Godon or Davis or Kirkland, and when the *Wasp* returned he made short work of the pretensions of the allies that she had no right to pass the blockade. The *Wasp* was accordingly sent back, and this time went above the squadron, and, greatly to the surprise of Lopez, arrived before his plans were completed. Had he supposed that the *Wasp* would come back so soon, he would not have indulged in so protracted a correspondence. He supposed that he would have abundant time to weave his network, that



was to convince the world that a great conspiracy against his government had been concocted in the American Legation. We, however, hoped that the Wasp would return before he had committed any act for which he would not imagine he could apologize ; for, desperate as he was, he did not intend to commit any act that would provoke the United States to declare war against him. He was deliberately planning to commit the greatest outrage, but was proceeding in such a way, as he supposed, that all neutral powers would admit he had respected the law of nations. But whether or not he were to succeed in making it appear that he was not responsible for events which he had prearranged to have the appearance of accidents, it would advantage us but little after they had happened. Though we were all to disappear, there would be two parties wherever the tragedy might be discussed ; and as there would be no evidence except such as he might manufacture, one half of the world might believe it, and might say that we had all received our deserts. The long, almost interminable, letters of Benitez, therefore, though insulting, Jesuitical, and clearly intended to entrap me into some admission or expression to my disadvantage, I regarded as favorable to me and to those about me. It took time to write them, and they were so long that he could not complain that my answers were as long as they were, and that I took as much time to get up my letters as he did to extort his declarations and invent his accusations.

It would be wearisome to the reader were I to give even a brief synopsis of this entire correspondence ; I will only note a few points which I made in my letter of the 11th of August, in reply to that of Benitez of the 6th, in which he pretended to give the declarations of Berges, of Carreras, and of Vasconcellos. The statement given in his letter as being the declaration of Carreras, that he had sent treasonable correspondence under cover to John F. Gowland, completely confounded me. It appeared to me that Lopez never could have known that Carreras had sent any letters to Gowland except by his own voluntary admission. If he had volunteered this testimony, it was clear that he had done so to exculpate him-



self, or at least to divert attention and persecution from himself by accusing me. I therefore denounced the statements of Carreras all through as being entirely false, further than that he did send a letter under cover to John F. Gowland, which he told me at the time was only a private letter to his family, having no allusion whatever to politics, or, at least, nothing in it unfavorable to Paraguay. Why he should have made such a statement I did not pretend to know. Possibly he thought that I should have advised him to remain in the Legation, and not deliver himself up; but I replied, "It is hard for me to believe that from such motives he could fabricate a series of such monstrous falsehoods as appears in his declaration, and try to implicate me as knowing of a conspiracy of whose existence I had not the most remote idea," and that, the more I knew of the affair, the greater was the mystery in which I was enveloped; that I could make nothing of it except that there was a conspiracy somewhere, of which I had known and suspected nothing, and that this declaration of Carreras, as reported by Benitez, went to show that, after having abused my confidence and hospitality, he and others had sought to divert the world's indignation from themselves by implicating me in their crimes, to which I added, "God knows that I would not wrong or unjustly accuse or suspect anybody, but that there has been treachery, ingratitude, and villany practised upon me in some quarter is but too evident." That this treachery and villany (I do not know that he owed me any gratitude) had been practised by Lopez, and by Lopez alone, I fully believed; and though I hypothetically ascribed it to others, yet, as the hypothesis was based only upon Lopez's statement, I knew that only upon him would fall the judgment of the next sentence, which is as follows: "All, however, will some day be made clear, and all the guilty parties must hold a place in the history of infamy never before paralleled." In reply to the statement made by Carreras, that I had in my possession the papers of Berges, I replied that they might be in my house, but if so they were contained in a trunk or box belonging to some other person,



and of whose contents I was entirely ignorant ; but that if they were in any such box, and the owner of it would send me a written order for the papers, and give me a description of them, so that I could distinguish them, I should be most happy to deliver them. I then reviewed the statement of Berges, but I will not recapitulate here the inconsistencies and the self-evident contradictions which I showed ; I thought they were so plain that if the *Semanario* in which they would be published should ever be read outside of Paraguay, it would vindicate me, though neither I nor any other of the witnesses then living should survive to do it.

There was one curious feature about this correspondence. At the time the evacuation of Asuncion was going on, Berges was the minister with whom I had to deal, and my notes regarding the persons whom I had received into my Legation were addressed to and answered by him ; and afterwards, when he was arrested and declared to be a traitor, the government justified and sustained all he had done, and maintained that he had in no way yielded anything to which the government objected, yet it maintained, at the same time, that he and I had then been in almost daily communication, plotting treason and forming plans for the overthrow of the government, so that it virtually held that Berges was at the same time acting the part of a traitor and of a loyal servant of the government of Paraguay. I therefore took occasion, in this letter of August 11, to point out this discrepancy, and to ask Benitez to state in which capacity Berges was acting at the different times when allusions were made to his official correspondence and to his declarations before the tribunal. When was he acting as a traitor, and when in the character of a loyal subject ? Long before this, I had taken it for granted that whenever I held any conversation with Berges about the situation of affairs, which I frequently did, that whatever I might say to him was immediately taken down by him and transmitted to Lopez ; I took it for granted that such was the case, and I used to speak with as much freedom with him as any one could with a person so reserved and cautious



and apparently distrustful as he was. We would speculate as to what might be the next move on the part of the allies, how it would be met by the Paraguayans, and of the various contingencies that might arise in the war ; of the means which Paraguay had to repel the allies if approached on this point or the other, and, in fact, talked with him as it would be proper for any foreign minister to talk when conversing with any member of the government who was supposed to enjoy its confidence and to be a man of discretion and judgment. The notes of these conversations, it was now evident, had all been preserved, for in Berges's declaration he alludes to the different interviews, and to what was said at different times, and I could recollect that he quoted some things of trivial importance which I had actually said ; but everything of the kind was distorted to have an allusion to the conspiracy or revolutions. If I said that the allies might approach in a certain direction and with a certain force, it was that the revolutionists or the conspirators might be prepared to co-operate with them whenever the time should seem to be opportune.

Berges had also stated that I had sent his letters under my official seal. That this could not be so it was easy to show by the dates ; as when I sent my letters to Captain Kirkland of the Wasp I had, and could have had, no communication with him, as he was then at the head-quarters. He was also at that time a close prisoner, though I did not say so in my letter, and if, at the times he mentioned, I had sent any letters for him out of the country, they must have gone in a balloon or been conveyed by a carrier-bird. At the conclusion of this letter I stated that as there was no truth in the declaration of Berges, Carreras, and others, for my part the correspondence must then close. If the government accepted my words as true, it must admit that I could give it no information ; but if it did not accept them, respect for my own character and the dignity of my office would forbid me to continue it ; that one of two things it should do, — accept my statements and drop the correspondence ; or, refusing to accept them, send me my passports and provide me with the means of



leaving the country. Thus for the third time did I ask for my passports.

This letter was barely despatched before I received another, signed by Berges, of which I give a translation, and also a copy of my reply.

“SAN FERNANDO, August 5, 1868.

“*To his Excellency Mr. Charles A. Washburn, Minister Resident of the United States of America.*

“SIR, — Events most unexpected by me decide me to address you this letter from the camp, to request you to have the goodness to deliver to the bearer the three sealed packages which I deposited with you in my quinta at Salinares, at the beginning of July ultimo, at the time of the first visit which I received from you, a few days after my arrival at the capital. The first is labelled by your own hand with the title, ‘Papers of Berges,’ and is the largest, being that which contains the correspondence which I have exchanged with the Marques de Caxias; the second is labelled, ‘Private Correspondence of Berges,’ and contains the letters exchanged with various persons in the Rio de la Plata; and the third is a small roll with the label, ‘Papers of my brother Miguel.’

“On this occasion I take pleasure in saluting you, and renewing the assurance with which I am your most attentive and sure servant.

“JOSÉ BERGES.”

“LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
ASUNCION, August 12, 1868.

“*His Honor Gumesindo Benítez, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

“SIR, — I have just received the note of your Honor, dated yesterday, together with a paper signed by José Berges, in which I am requested to deliver, not one, as formerly represented in his declarations, but three packages which he says he delivered to me at his house on one of the first days of July, at the time of my visit to him a few days after his return from San Fernando. Not having ever received any package, letter, or communication from him, as I have repeatedly advised your Honor, I am unable to see the object in sending me this paper. In my note of yesterday I said if any person had ever sent or brought any such papers to my house, and would send a written order for them, and a description so that I could know which they were, I would be happy to deliver them.



But I did not promise impossibilities, or to deliver papers I had never received, whoever might send for them or however minutely they might be described.

"I avail myself of this occasion to renew assurances of distinguished consideration.

"CHARLES A. WASHBURN."

On the 13th I sent another note, devoted to a defence of my *protégés*, as Benitez called them, Bliss and Masterman. In answer to the pretension that because the government had not distinctly recognized them as members of the Legation it therefore had a right to demand them, and that I had no right to refuse to deliver them up, I stated that I had given in their names, and that if it had not recognized them, neither had it recognized my wife and child, nor my private secretary. nor any of the servants that had been long in my employ; and that, according to his reasoning and logic, he had only to say that any one or all of them were accused, and that the government refused to recognize them as belonging to my Legation, and I had no remedy but to send them away. I also stated, that if the testimony of Bliss and Masterman could be of any value to the government, they were perfectly willing to give it, and if a notary would come to my house they would give any information which they possessed in order to ascertain the truth in regard to other accused parties; and that Mr. Bliss had declared to me, in relation to the paper which Benitez said he had "signed in the secret committee of mutual obligations to commit an infamous crime," that if any such paper, signed by him, should be shown to me, he would instantly leave my house; and that, while I should insist upon my rights of Legation, I should take good care that he kept his promise to me. To Benitez's repeated complaint that I did not accept his official statement that they were guilty in preference to their own declaration to the contrary, I replied that I should not question the sincerity of his belief in their crime, but that, as he did not speak from his own knowledge, I doubted the truthfulness of his informants. The declarations of Berges and Carreras I knew contained almost as



many falsehoods as sentences; and if statements so false had been made by men who had held such honorable and responsible positions, it was very possible that equally false declarations had been made for the purpose of implicating others. But whether they were culpable or not, it was not a question of guilt or innocence, it was a question of the rights of Legation. I had long before given in their names as belonging to my diplomatic suite, and the government, by not objecting to them, tacitly acknowledged them as such, as much as it had acknowledged anybody in my house, and had just as much right to claim any one else of my family or household as to claim either of them. I concluded this letter by saying, that as all these charges were made by men who by their own showing were traitors and ingrates, the government could have no evidence worthy of credence, and I hoped it would not persist in its course, but would allow Bliss and Masterman to remain. After I had declared their status as members of the Legation, I should not, under any circumstances, deliver them up, except to force.

After I had despatched this note, the solitude of Asuncion became more and more oppressive. No one ever ventured near my house, either native or foreigner. My servant Basilio continued to go beyond the city limits to obtain the meagre food which could still be procured, and my fears every day increased lest he should tell me that he wished to leave my employ. The families living a little distance from the capital, whom we had been accustomed to visit, had nearly all been forced to retire into the interior. These families consisted mostly of foreigners, and all the men had been arrested and taken in irons to San Fernando, and were subsequently murdered. In my rides about town I seldom met anybody except policemen and soldiers; but I observed one thing that caused me great alarm in regard to many of my friends. I noticed that the houses of many foreigners, and of many of the better class of Paraguayans, had been sealed up; that a bit of cloth had been attached to the doors with sealing-wax in such a way that the door could not be opened without



disclosing the fact by the rupture of the cloth. What the object of this was I could not divine, for they had usually been sealed up during the night, and I had no means of knowing whether they had been previously opened or not. I suspected that the houses had been searched, and I subsequently learned that not only had they been searched, but everything in the way of money, jewelry, or other valuables of small bulk had been taken away. I feared lest the owners of all such houses had been doomed to destruction, and I now believe that not one of them was alive three months after I left Paraguay. I could only augur from the sealing up of these houses that disaster had overtaken their owners, but I could hardly understand how that could be, when many of them were the property of persons who, I supposed, enjoyed the confidence of Lopez to the highest extent of any people in Paraguay. The houses of most of the judges and of many priests had that ominous sign upon them.

What surprised me most was to see that the house of Colonel Fernandez, who had long been Lopez's confidential business man, was also closed, and the mark of the sealing-wax was on its doors. Up to this time I had no suspicion that he had fallen into disgrace. I had known that, at the time most of the arrests of other people had been made, he was the military commander at Asuncion, and it had devolved upon him to give the orders for their arrest; and had there been anything like conspiracy, it seemed to me that, with his assistance and approval, it might have succeeded, and that if it had been nipped in the bud it had been owing to his fidelity to his master. And now, if he had also fallen into disgrace, who was to be left to carry out the arbitrary decrees of Lopez? Sanabria, the Chief of Police at Luque, was also arrested not long afterwards, as I have since been informed, though I did not know it at that time. He and Fernandez had the whole power in their hands, the military being entirely under their control; and had they been so disposed, they, and they alone, could have saved Paraguay from its subsequent desolation, preserved the lives of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and chil-



dren, and been regarded as heroes to be blessed and honored. Acting in concert, they might have cut off the supplies entirely; they might have seized all the steamers, and, at first pretending to act by the orders of Lopez, they might have left him at the mercy of his enemies. But instead of that they sent him the supplies without which his whole army must have died or capitulated; and they executed all his cruel orders, arresting the others who had been accused, and sending them to head-quarters to be executed. And yet after this, strange as it may seem, they were both of them arrested, tortured most inhumanly, and afterwards put to death. Every person, in fact, holding authority at Asuncion or Luque, was arrested and executed. Did Lopez believe there was a conspiracy? If so, would he have intrusted the task of arresting and sending its members to his presence to those leaders in it who must have been the only persons that could have rendered it successful? Yet it was by Fernandez and Sanabria that the entire population, not in the army, was arrested; and as soon as this work was done, they too were called before Lopez, accused of treason and conspiracy with those they had before sent to him, and all shared the same fate. On one occasion, about this time, as I was taking my daily recreation on horseback about the town, I met one of the chief men of the arsenal, an Englishman by the name of Hunter, who was passing along the street, several Paraguayans being in sight. I reined up my horse to speak to him, asking him for the news. He made a deprecatory sign, and said, "There is nothing, I am frightened to speak to you," and passed rapidly along. Each day I saw more houses sealed up; and from the fearful anathemas heaped upon so many people in the *Seminario*, I judged that the property which those houses contained, or had contained, had been confiscated by the government, and that the owners had all been declared traitors, and had been or were to be destroyed.

But an unusual length of time passed without my receiving anything further from Benitez; and I had always found hitherto that the longer a letter was in preparation the more



threatening were its contents. On the morning of the 23d of August, the day being Sunday, I took a stroll towards the bank of the river, and saw one or two steamers lying near the wharf with steam up, as if about to start. As I approached the corner of the street I saw my friend Benitez, who I had supposed was hard at work at Luque getting up a despatch that was to confound me, walking rapidly towards one of the steamers. My first thought was to hail him; but as he averted his face from me, it appeared that he did not wish to recognize me, and I turned in another direction, while he continued his course to the wharf and went aboard the vessel. Was it possible that he, too, had fallen into disgrace? — he who had been writing those fearfully long letters, trying to prove me a conspirator, and to vindicate the right of his government to take Bliss and Masterman from my house by force if necessary; whose letters showed a cunning duplicity and a shameless disregard of truth that evinced a zeal so great as to have little respect for appearances, — could it be that *he*, too, had fallen into disgrace? Probably not, as I then thought; probably Lopez had called him below, that the correspondence might all be carried on at head-quarters. Still, as the man apparently did not wish to recognize me, but turned his face the other way, it was evident he was not in a hopeful mood. To judge from the fate of the others who had been called below, he had little to anticipate for himself but tortures and death, and to fear that, like Manlove, he was “going to his destiny.”

Up to this time I had entertained a feeling of contempt and bitter animosity towards Benitez. He was a man of considerable ability, and of an active, vigorous mind; but the alacrity with which he had always appeared to serve Lopez, in writing the foolish and disgraceful flattery of him contained in the *Semanario*, could but provoke contempt from any one who might read it, save and except Lopez. I had supposed, too, that he knew something of what he wrote, and that when he made statements to me that were false he had done so willingly and maliciously, for the purpose of entrapping or intimi-



dating me. Early in the war, a half-brother of his by the name of Valiente had been executed by supreme order, as was believed for no fault or crime whatever ; and yet Benitez did not appear to be affected by it, but continued to be always as eulogistic and sycophantic in praise of Lopez as ever before. I therefore regarded him as a man who actually admired the character of Lopez, which I considered hardly consistent for a person bearing the human form. It would have been charity to regard him as a hypocrite in all he did, and to believe that he was always writing with the knife at his throat. But he was one of the few that Lopez had around him who seemed to approve and justify all his acts ; and as he could not but know that his letters to me were filled with transparent falsehoods, I could not but have a feeling of great aversion and contempt for him. But my resentment towards him gave way to a great extent when I saw him embark on board that steamer, and it ceased entirely when I learned, as I subsequently did, that on reaching San Fernando he was put in heavy fetters, was subjected to the most terrible torture, was flogged until the flesh was nearly all cut from his back and shoulders, was subjected to the *cepo uruguayana*, to the rack, and starvation, and finally, when nearly dead, was taken out and shot.

And for what ? In the interview which he had had with me on the 25th of July, of which I have given a long account, he had made the remark that they *knew all* about the conspiracy, — “ *Sabemos todo* ” (“ We know all ”). For using these words he was called below, and was told by the inquisitors that he had told me he knew all, but he had never told them all, and that therefore it was evident that he too was a conspirator ; and he was accordingly subjected to that fearful treatment which all who had in any way excited the suspicion of Lopez were made to undergo.

On the 27th of August another incident of unfavorable omen occurred. The old Spaniard, José Solis, came to my house, bringing a note from Madam Lynch, requesting him to call upon me and take away all the property which she



had in the Legation. This property of hers was contained in three very large boxes, which were nailed up very strongly, and sealed in such a way that they could not possibly be opened without betraying the fact. She had sent them to my house about the time of the evacuation of the capital, when it was feared that the place might be taken by the allies, and that my house alone would be spared from search and sack. What the boxes contained I never knew. At different times she had withdrawn one after another and returned them, and my suspicion was, that whereas at first she had only placed in the boxes her most valuable goods, including her diamonds and jewels, — of which she had, as it was said, a hundred thousand dollars' worth, or more, — afterwards she had added to that very much of the jewelry which had been taken by force or robbery from the native people. No one of the houses of the foreigners, I believe, was opened, nor was their money or jewels taken, until all these boxes had been sent to my house for the last time. What reason she had for withdrawing them at this time did not appear ; but the inference we drew from the fact was that my house was no longer to be a place of protection ; that all of us were to be removed from it in one way or another ; and that, if the enemy ever should come, my power of protecting anything would have already ceased. Solis told me that he had been requested to withdraw the boxes and send them by the steamer to head-quarters. This, as I afterwards learned, was done ; and as she knew that Lopez had resolved to make way with me, she had them buried in some secret place, and all who had been engaged in, or knew of, the work, with one exception, were immediately despatched, so that they could never betray her secret. When Lopez was driven from that point she was compelled to leave this property behind her, as, the country being occupied soon after by the allies, she could not send it with the other spoils, and neither neutral gunboats nor honorable ministers could assist her in completing the theft. These boxes were buried somewhere in Paraguay, between Villeta and the Tebicuari, but of the exact point I could not tell within a dozen miles.



As I have already said, the time previous to the arrival of Leite Pereira had passed on the whole agreeably, notwithstanding the many anxious moments and many discussions of a gloomy character. We shut our eyes to the impending evils, and did not allow them to deter us from our literary pursuits, or from our billiards, whist, and chess. But after he and the Orientales had been arrested, and the English sent away, the overhanging dangers would not permit sufficient abstraction of the mind to admit of chess or whist, and even billiards afforded no diversion. While Bliss and Masterman were looking every hour for the entrance of the police to arrest them, and fearing every night that it would be the last which they would pass with their ankles unshackled or outside the walls of a prison, it was hardly to be supposed they would have much inclination for amusements. But though fear and anxiety may cause one to pass sleepless nights and anxious days, nature will finally prevail ; and when these trials have been endured for a while, men will eat and sleep, and the mind will occasionally rebound to playfulness and humor. After a time we could joke upon our own situation, though the subject of these sallies was frequently of a very grim nature. But the arrival of a letter making our situation appear more desperate and hopeless would invariably lead to a very serious and prolonged discussion of its contents, that was gradually to be succeeded by a rebound and a sort of reckless cheerfulness and gayety.

This peculiarity of the human mind, as we observed its workings in ourselves, was frequently remarked upon, and we compared our situation to that of persons who, at the time of the French Revolution, had been marked as victims for the guillotine and arrested. We had read how such persons, when being thrown together, became after a short time reckless, and, as it were, indifferent to their fate, and would joke and laugh over the impending decapitation as a thing inevitable, yet not worth a serious thought. We however, were not numerous enough to enter into any boisterous or demonstrative hilarity, and besides, we had not



the felicity of looking forward to the guillotine ; what we looked to was torture, starvation, and death, by the lance or musket, only when human nature could endure no more. I believe that Bliss and Masterman would have gladly compromised at any time for the guillotine ; had my wife and child been beyond the power of Lopez and Lynch, I would eagerly have done the same. It was not the death that Lopez could inflict upon us that we had most reason to dread. What infamous acts we might confess after being subjected to starvation, exposure, the lash, and the rack, we could not tell. We knew that whatever Lopez desired to extort would be given to the world as confessions, and that he would take good care that no one should survive who might disprove them. He had the keys of truth in his own hands as no monarch or potentate ever had before in this world, and could prevent any version of events except his own from ever seeing the light. We believed we could endure as much as most men, and that nothing could force us to false confessions. We had read of men who had been burnt at the stake, and yet had refused to the last breath to deny their faith ; and we had believed that Rodriguez, Carreras, and Pereira would have been torn in pieces sooner than confess to infamous acts of which they were innocent. Rodriguez, especially, had that chivalric character, that firmness, and high sense of honor, that sensitiveness to the good name of his family, that tortures such as the old martyrs had endured could never have drawn from him confessions so infamous and false as were contained in the declarations which were sent me as being made by him before the tribunals of Lopez. At the time he left us he would sooner have been flayed alive than have made such admissions ; but he and Carreras and others must have been subjected to such prolonged torture that they were no longer the men they had been. The fact that they had confessed to charges which we knew to be false and infamous told the whole story of their sufferings ; and we foresaw that if we were taken we should be subjected to the same ordeal, and when worn out with hunger, thirst, and every torture that fiends could invent,



when the mind had given way under the prolonged agony, what assurance had we that we might not admit ourselves guilty of acts equally infamous, and sign any confession placed before us?

In speculations of this kind, and in reckoning over our chances of escape, that each day seemed to be growing less, these terrible days were passed. Bliss and Masterman had the advantage of me in one respect. Each of them was a single man, having neither wife nor children on whom Lopez could inflict his accursed tortures. But for my part I clearly foresaw that, if nothing else would force me to confess to such charges as he might think most disgraceful, my wife would be tortured before my eyes. Let not the reader start, or say that not even Lopez could commit such horrid barbarity. To his own sisters he was guilty of conduct equally savage and fiendish. He subjected them to the most merciless floggings, and compelled them to witness the tortures and executions of their husbands, and gave orders for them to be lanced to death ere they should fall into the hands of the allies. Even the mother who bore him was compelled to go before one of his so-called tribunals and declare that she had no son but him who was subjecting her to such cruel indignities, and afterwards was daily flogged by order of her first-born; and her death-warrant had been signed by him when he fell, like a gored wild beast, in the mud of the Aquidaban. Why, then, should he spare me and mine, when he could delight in such unnatural and horrid cruelties towards his own nearest kindred?

From the course pursued by Lopez in his correspondence, taken with the forced and false "declarations" that had been extorted from Rodriguez and others, it was easy to divine what treatment he had in reserve for the rest of us. I foresaw it all, while yet in his power, as clearly as I knew it afterwards, when the only foreigner about him who knew anything of his secret purposes escaped from his grasp and wrote the details of his plan. This letter, the first written to me by Dr. Stewart after being taken prisoner, confirmed all I had before



suspected, and gave me the order of proceedings that was to have been pursued towards me but for the timely arrival of the Wasp. The details of their plan he had learned from the conversations that had taken place between Lopez and Madam Lynch when he was present, and from remarks of the inquisitors and torturers who were to superintend the execution of the prearranged plan. From this and subsequent information furnished me by Dr. Stewart, I learned that Bliss and Masterman were to have been arrested about the time that the American flag was seen flaunting in the river below. They were to be compelled to corroborate all that the other "conspirators" had confessed, and to add to it that treasonable communications were still passing between me and Caxias. Then, for the "safety of the Republic," it was to be found necessary to restrain me of my liberty, and I should be taken to head-quarters and subjected to the torture which Lopez was anticipating the delight of witnessing. In the mean while, to supplement my confessions, Madam Lynch was to make a visit of sympathy and condolence to Mrs. Washburn, and tell her that I was in no personal danger; that I was well treated, and would be set at liberty and permitted to leave the country so soon as I had given in my testimony in regard to the revolution which I had already admitted had been planned. To hasten this result, it was only necessary for Mrs. Washburn to write a personal letter to the President, who was "very kind-hearted," and admit that there was a conspiracy, and that to her own knowledge I had been a party to it. Having obtained such a letter, it was to be used to overcome my obstinacy, and I was to be promised that, on making similar admissions, my own tortures should cease, and I should be permitted to leave the country with my wife and child. Judging from their experience with others, they supposed that, under the repeated application of the *cepo uruguayana*, I should by that time be willing to confess anything to escape the horrible torture. But if I were still obstinate, my wife was to have been brought into my presence and her back and shoulders flayed with



sticks, as were afterwards those of Lopez's mother and sisters, Pancha Garmendia, Mrs. Martinez, and many others. Would I not then have confessed to anything false or infamous, if by so doing I could stay the stripes? I do not know. But I do know that Lopez had attained a skill and refinement in torture that neither holy inquisitor, nor cannibal savage, nor imaginary demon, had ever reached.

It seemed that Lopez regarded me at this time somewhat as Polyphemus regarded Ulysses when he caught him and his companions in his cave, and was intending to keep me as the last of the foreigners whom he was to devour. His antipathy towards me, it seems, had been growing stronger ever since my visit to the camp of Caxias, more than a year before, when the proffered mediation of the United States had been rejected. He had thought that I should have had both the will and the influence to induce our government to intervene in his behalf, and save him from the consequences of his own folly and ambition. I had warned him when he began the war as he did, without previous warning, that he was committing a fatal error, and now he hated me for my Cassandra-like words. I had offended him by giving shelter in my house to so many other people, and he thought it a cruel wrong to himself that I should stand between him and people whom he wished to torture. For these, and perhaps other reasons, he had come to hate me worse than any one else in the world; and so well was this understood, that the abject flatterers about him, who sought to escape the fate that was befalling so many others by saying what would be most pleasing to him, soon learned that, next to adulation of himself, his bravery, his kindness, and his wisdom, nothing was so grateful to his ear as the most ribald abuse of me and my family. His torturers had learned this, and their victims were made to understand that the way to mitigate the horrors of the *cepo*, or the lash, was to accuse *el Ministro Americano* of all manner of iniquities and indecencies, and his wife as worse than he. When Lopez was partially intoxicated, and felt in a humor for hearing himself praised and his enemies denounced, he would gather around him his staff



his torturers, and his secretaries, and encourage them to speak. For a long time the great object of their objurgations, the *bête noir* to be cursed, was President Mitre. But after Mitre had left the army their mark of abuse was sometimes Caxias and sometimes the Emperor. At a later period I had the honor of supplanting these high dignitaries, and the flexibility of the Spanish language, that had been so often strained to find terms adequate to express the praises of Lopez, was now subjected to a severer test to frame expressions of obloquy and abuse of the American Minister. Lopez himself would set an example of grossness and obscenity which his flatterers dared not rival, and Madam Lynch would cover her face and pretend to blush at the immoralities of the American Legation.

From these proceedings all who were about the headquarters of Lopez understood that the American Minister was a doomed victim. The torturers were expecting to have him to break in to confession. The few foreigners about the camp were expecting every day to learn of his arrest, and with that they knew their own chances of ever escaping alive would be gone. They had not supposed, neither had I, that Lopez would ever execute me publicly.\* He yet cher-

\* "*Interrogatory 17.* — Did you consider your life in danger previous to the departure of Mr. Washburn ?

"*Answer.* — Yes.

"*Interrogatory 18.* — Had Mr. Washburn been made prisoner, would it have affected your condition and that of other foreigners in Paraguay who have since escaped ?

"*Answer.* — Indisputably. Our lives would have been endangered, most likely taken ; and had Mr. Washburn been thrown into prison, as was at one time suggested by Mrs. Lynch and by the late Bishop of Paraguay, I am convinced that he would have been tortured and made way with like the other victims of Lopez. In this case his death would no doubt have been attributed to natural causes or to suicide. Lopez would have set at defiance the whole power of the United States, and in all probability would not have left one of us to tell the story of his crimes.

"*Interrogatory 19.* — Did you consider the arrival of the Wasp and the departure of Mr. Washburn as improving your chance of escape ?

"*Answer.* — Certainly ; the belief of us who remained in the power of Lopez was that our chances of liberation were favored by his having escaped. He would be sure to acquaint the States and the whole civilized world with the true



ished the delusion that he would come out triumphant from the war, and he believed that with his means of manufacturing testimony he could satisfy the United States that the *accident* to their Minister was not to be imputed to him, that he would run little, if any, risk of provoking them to make war against him. He was so absolute, he had many ways to accomplish his object and yet appear innocent. His plans of torture would have been executed by persons who would have been put to death immediately afterwards. Madam Lynch was in favor of assassination, and for the credit of the sex it is to be hoped she recoiled from the hideous torture that Lopez proposed both for Mrs. Washburn and myself. In either case Lopez, to have proved that the deep damnation of our taking off was not to be imputed to him, would have executed several Paraguayans as having been our assassins. Then what could our government say? What could it do? Would he not protest that he deeply deplored the bloody deed, that he had punished the perpetrators? and would he not show his grief by posthumous honors? and would he not testify his sorrow by sending our child, under a flag of truce, with an escort, through the lines, and with many messages of regret, and with reams of manufactured evidence of the natural death of its mother, and of the suicide or assassination of its father, and request that it might be forwarded to its relatives in the United States?

It may be supposed that some part of the above is conjecture; and so it is in some of its details. But it is according to the general plan marked out by Lopez and Madam Lynch,

character of the tyrant, was our thought; would unveil the mystery which had so long shrouded the acts of the President, and kept out of sight the sufferings of Paraguay. Once public opinion was directed to the subject by the evidence of an unimpeachable witness, we felt assured that public sympathy would follow, and no effort be spared to rescue us from our perilous position. . . . While the Wasp, with Mr. Washburn on board, was waiting for the correspondence of Lopez, he asked me what I thought of his permitting Mr. Washburn to leave the country. Of course I could only answer that it was a proof of his Excellency's generosity, for I myself was in daily dread of being tortured and executed." — *Testimony of Dr. William Stewart, Paraguayan Investigation, by the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, pp. 311, 312.



to be varied according to circumstances ; and, had not the Wasp arrived for a few weeks later, would have been carried into effect. Should any of the others who were nearest Lopez during these times, and who yet survive, ever give to the world the true story of what they saw and knew, it will be confirmed. One only of the survivors will not confirm it ; that is the person who urged Lopez to commit the atrocities which the others will record, — Madam Lynch.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

The Transactions at Head-Quarters unknown in Asuncion. — Arrest of General Barrios. — His Character. — Indications that Lopez believed in a Conspiracy. — Other Indications that it was all previously planned by himself. — Forging Fetters. — Lopez's Conduct inexplicable. — General Bruguez's Fall, Arrest, and Execution. — What was it for? — Barrios attempts Suicide. — His Wife, Lopez's Sister, horribly flogged. — Insanity and Execution of Barrios. — Affected Piety of Lopez. — Why did no one rebel or resist? — His Constant Fear of Assassination. — Anecdote from Thompson's Book. — Madam Lynch increases his Natural Cowardice. — Her Selfishness. — She causes many to be arrested and tortured. — The other Intimates of Lopez. — Their Fate. — Madam Lynch in Danger. — Brazilian Chivalry. — The "Conspiracy." — No other Proof than that of Tortured Witnesses.

THE "declarations" that were sent to me in Benitez's letters as being the admissions of the leading conspirators was conclusive evidence of the treatment they had received. But regarding the condition of, and accusations against, many others in whom we felt a deep interest, we knew scarcely anything. Our ignorance of the real state of affairs was a blessing we did not then appreciate. From the official letters we had surmised enough to be aware of our dangerous situation; but had we known of the daily tortures and executions that were taking place at San Fernando our anxieties for ourselves must have been greatly increased. As early as the 15th of August we had seen that General Barrios, the brother-in-law of Lopez, had been degraded from his position of Minister of War and Marine. What the reason was for his disgrace we were unable to conjecture. He was eminently fitted to do the work of Lopez or Madam Lynch, being a man of dashing valor and as cruel as he was brave. For his military successes Lopez had been more indebted to him than to any man in his army, excepting only the English engineer, Colonel George



Thompson. Like Lopez, he was regardless of the number of men sacrificed, and would kill his own soldiers for the slightest delinquency, in a manner highly approved by his master. Before the war he had commended himself to the favor of Madam Lynch in a way calculated to win her highest regard. This imported teacher of morality, having suspected a man employed about her premises of too great an intimacy with one of her maid-servants, affected to be so greatly scandalized and shocked that any improprieties should be committed in her abode of virtue and purity that she sent the offender with a note to Colonel Barrios, then holding the office of Mayor of the Plaza. What the contents of the note were may be inferred from the fact that the man was flogged to death.

There would seem to be little doubt that at one time Lopez really believed that some of his principal officers were false to him and were engaged in a plot for his overthrow. Yet his conduct was so inconsistent with any theory of this kind, that, of all who afterwards escaped, not one can explain it. It is all a mystery. It can hardly be explained on the theory that he was insane, for in all matters in which he was uninfluenced by his vanity and his innate love of cruelty, his mind was as clear and logical as ever.

One fact that came to my knowledge long before there was any pretext of a conspiracy, and before the evacuation of the capital or the arrest of all the men in the country not in the army, leads to the conclusion that the whole long tragedy of horrors was deliberately planned while Lopez was yet at Paso Pucu. Early in the year 1868 I had been told by Mr. Treuenfeld, the constructor of telegraphs, that in one of the workshops in Asuncion several native blacksmiths were employed in making grillos, or fetters. The men so employed were kept under strict surveillance, and worked in a shop by themselves, so that the public should not know what they were doing. Treuenfeld, however, learned that the whole force in this shop was engaged in making fetters. These fetters consisted of a ring for each ankle, so made that an iron bar about fourteen inches long was riveted to them. Their weight varied from



five to twenty-five pounds. Sometimes as many as three pairs of the latter were placed on the limbs of one person, and were kept upon him continuously for months. There had always been, from the time of Francia, an enormous number of these fetters in the country; and the fact that Lopez had a number of men employed in making hundreds or thousands more, at a time when there was nothing to indicate for whom they were intended, was certainly ominous of danger to somebody.

If there were in reality a conspiracy, as Lopez pretended when he arrested so many, its discovery just after fetters had been made for them all was certainly a remarkable coincidence. But if the whole thing was but an invention of his own by which he could gratify his love of inflicting pain and misery, and at the same time have a pretext for robbing his victims of their property, the coincidence may be explained without ascribing it to a special providence, as Lopez was accustomed to ascribe any event favorable to his cause.

But if Lopez never believed in the conspiracy, his course is equally inexplicable. Why, then, did he kill off nearly all of his best officers? Why kill Barrios? Why kill Bruguez? They were his two best generals, reckless, cruel, and brave. They were always at his head-quarters, and he could not well spare them. No one about the camp had ever noticed but that they were both in favor with their chief, as they were often in his company and usually dined at his table.

Colonel Thompson gives the following account of the reward that Bruguez received for his fidelity and valor: "My room at Lopez's head-quarters was next to that of General Bruguez, and he and I were very good friends. One evening, arriving from Fortin, I went into his room to see him, and found that all his things were gone, and other things in their place. There was a boy in the room, and I asked him for General Bruguez; he did not know. I then asked him if he had moved? 'Yes.' 'Where?' 'I don't know.' I then imagined that something must be wrong with him, and asked no further questions; I had asked too many already. Next



day I dined with Lopez ; Barrios, Bruguez, and the Bishop used always to dine with him, but Bruguez was not there. Lopez's little boy asked where he was, and they told him, with smiles, ' He is gone.' He was, I have since learned, bayoneted to death."

A cheerful prospect for the other guests ! Two of those, Barrios and the Bishop, who told the boy with smiles that Bruguez was gone, were shortly after to follow him, and share his fate.

The cause of the sudden fall of Bruguez, I afterwards learned, was this : When Lopez first began torturing people to make them confess to having taken part in the conspiracy, his plan was to subject them to such misery that when they could endure it no longer they would in their agony admit anything. Having confessed their own guilt, the torture was afterwards reapplied to force them to expose their accomplices. As they had never known anything about the conspiracy, of course they could have no confederates ; and as the torture was continued till they either denounced others or died, they would accuse at random. One of these miserable wretches, it seems, while in the *cepo uruguayana*, mentioned Bruguez as one of the conspirators, and said that he was the leader of them, and that if the revolution were successful he was to marry the daughter of Sinfiorano Caceres, Madam Lynch's former partner in the butchering business, and have himself elected President. The bare hint that anybody else might, in a possible contingency, be eligible to the Presidency aroused Lopez to fury. Bruguez was immediately removed in the manner described by Colonel Thompson, and Caceres and his son, according to Resquin's Diary, were executed.

His wife and daughter, it is conjectured from the fact that their names do not appear in the lists of those who were executed, were tortured to death.

The only inference to be drawn from the fact that Bruguez was so summarily despatched is that, at the time, Lopez believed in the conspiracy.



It was but a few days after the arrest of Bruguez that Barrios was put under arrest. What his offence had been will probably never be known. He had seen the most of those who but a little before were highest in the confidence of their common master arrested and horribly tortured. He had known Lopez from a boy, and had been his willing tool in outraging other people. He had been his accomplice and assistant long years before, and acted as pander at the time that he attempted an infamous outrage on the beautiful



GENERAL JOSÉ VICENTE BARRIOS.

(Executed by his brother-in-law, Dec. 21, 1868.)

Pancha Garmendia. He had seen so many subjected to the torture, and in many cases had ordered its application, that, brave man as he was on the battle-field, his courage failed him when he was arrested, and he attempted to commit suicide. This was construed by Lopez as evidence of guilt,



and he directed that he should be well treated till he could sufficiently recover to endure the *cepo* and make confession. His wife, Doña Inocencia, the elder sister of Lopez, was thereupon immediately arrested and questioned as to what she knew of the conspiracy. She could only reply, as did everybody else when first questioned, that she knew nothing. She was then flogged like any felon. Like all the Lopez family she was very fleshy, and for a Paraguayan of very fair complexion.

For the work of flogging the strongest men were always selected, and they were given withs or sticks of a very hard and heavy kind of wood, about four feet long, and an inch in diameter at the butt, and tapering to half the size at the other end. Their orders were to lay on with all their might, and, if one of them hesitated or faltered, he was immediately seized and subjected to the same treatment. The flogging of Doña Inocencia, as described by some of the witnesses, was such as to strike them, though familiar with such scenes, as peculiarly savage and brutal. Her endurance and resignation astonished them. Though the flesh was all cut away from her shoulders by the repeated blows, she never uttered a cry or a groan ; and when they ceased for a moment, and she was importuned to confess, and thus win the clemency of the kind-hearted President, her reply was, "I know nothing ; ask my husband."

Doña Inocencia was not flogged to death, nor was she executed. The manner of her deliverance will be described at the proper place. Her husband, after recovering from his self-inflicted wounds, was so harshly treated that he became insane, in which condition he was executed by shooting on the 21st of December,—more than three months after I left Paraguay.

During the time that Lopez was perpetrating his most atrocious acts he affected to be very religious. He had a church built at San Fernando so that he might perform his devotions in public ; and while his inquisitors and torturers were engaged in extorting false confessions by means of the



*cepo*, the rack, and flogging, he would be in the church, frequently for four hours at a time, kneeling and mumbling and crossing himself, while between the genuflections the Bishop or Dean Bogado would tell the people of their duties towards him, as he was the anointed of the Lord, set to rule over them, and making devotion to him their first and only duty.

I have been asked a great many times, why, if Lopez was the monster that I and all others who are not sharers of the property he stole from the multitudes whom he afterwards murdered have denounced him to be, some one of those who were near him did not assassinate him? If he was arresting and executing daily his most devoted friends, could not those still at large and permitted to approach him foresee their own fate? And was there no one of them all to stop his wholesale executions by a Brutus-like act? That has been a hard question to answer. But Francia died in his bed, after near thirty years of tyranny such as had never been known before. Rosas ruled for years in Buenos Aires with an iron hand, keeping up all the while an organized band of assassins, killing and robbing whom he pleased with impunity; and such was the spell under which the people were that no one ever attempted to kill him, and he is yet alive. The Paraguayans of Lopez's time had never known anything but a reign of terror; and from my knowledge of their character I do not believe there was a single person in the whole country who, at the suggestion that he should lift his arm against Lopez, would not have felt himself detected, and certain to be put to death unless he instantly denounced it. But, notwithstanding this, Lopez was undoubtedly in constant fear of assassination, and allowed no one to approach him unless it were those who showed alacrity in executing his most cruel orders, and who, in case of his fall, would share his fate. "He was," says Thompson, "in great fear of being assassinated, and at night had a double cordon of sentinels around his house. This was afterwards increased to a treble one. During the daytime these were removed, and the guard was kept under an open roof, next door to



Lopez. People who wished to see him had to wait under this same roof. One evening I was waiting there to see Lopez, as were also several other officers, and a sergeant of the guard entered into conversation with me. After a short time there was a great stir, officers going in and out of Lopez's room, the guard relieved, and the other officers who were waiting all arrested. One of Lopez's aides-de-camp came and said to me, 'His Excellency sends word to you to write down all the conversation you have had with the sergeant of the guard, and to bring it to-morrow morning.' I went away, not expecting to be able to remember a twentieth part of the silly talk of the sergeant; but, as things looked serious, I tried, and probably remembered it all. It filled a whole sheet of paper, and was all of it somewhat in this style: 'The sergeant asked me if Queen Victoria always wore her crown when she went out to walk.' 'The sergeant asked me if I should wear the Paraguayan uniform when I went to England.' It was sealed up and taken next morning to Lopez about 7 A. M. He was not yet up, but the sergeant was already shot, and all the soldiers of the guard had received a hundred lashes each. A few months afterward I heard that the sergeant had been conspiring with two men who had just returned from Uruguayana to murder the President, and that the two men had been found that night in the yard of Lopez's house. The sergeant's manner was certainly not that of a conspirator. Lopez never said a word about it to me, nor acknowledged the receipt of the written conversation, probably feeling ashamed to do so."

Similar conspiracies were frequently detected. Prisoners taken near the lines, or deserters from the other side, were generally assumed to be assassins sent by General Mitre to murder Lopez, and were tortured till they admitted it or expired. Lopez was constantly publishing in his *Semanario* that men had been sent to assassinate him, and even wrote to Mitre, accusing him of having done so. Yet no one besides himself ever believed either that Mitre had done anything of the kind or that anybody else ever harbored such an idea in



his mind. No suspicious person could ever possibly get near him, and he was so constantly and immediately surrounded by his staff that any one who should make a movement towards him would have been instantly struck down. Men like Francia, Rosas, and Lopez are not assassinated. Being conscious that there are thousands who would be glad to see them killed in any way possible, they suspect everybody that comes near them, and surround themselves with guards and sentinels. It is men like Abraham Lincoln, who, "with charity for all and malice towards none," cannot realize that any one should desire to kill them, and therefore expose themselves to the dagger or bullet of the fanatic or madman.

Madam Lynch, for some purpose of her own, was always trying to increase the natural cowardice of Lopez. She had an abundance of that courage of which he was so greatly in want, and in time of battle would expose herself where the danger was greatest ; and it is probable that her object in playing on his fears was to increase her influence over him. When he, at the first sound of a gun from the allied lines, would hasten to gain the shelter of his cave at Paso Pucu, she would move about unconscious of danger, as danger she knew there was none ; yet at the same time she would counsel him not to expose to a chance shot his valuable life, — a life on which the hopes, the fortunes, and the liberty of all Paraguayans depended. She was also constantly advising him to greater precautions, telling him that his enemies were thick around him. She saw that such counsels pleased him and increased her own influence, and she would tell him that he was too good, too credulous, too kind-hearted, and too indifferent to danger for his own safety. With her at his side ever whispering in his ear that he was in great danger, that his enemies were plotting his destruction, it is not strange that he was constantly haunted with fear of treachery and assassination. No one else of those around him could venture to tell him that such fears were groundless, without a certainty of being suspected as a traitor and an accomplice of conspirators. To this bad, selfish, pitiless woman may be ascribed many of the



numberless acts of cruelty of her paramour. That she was the direct cause of the arrest, torture, and execution of thousands of the best people in Paraguay there is no doubt, and it is equally certain that it was for her benefit and that of her children that so many hundreds were arrested and robbed of their property, and afterwards tortured as conspirators or traitors, and then executed, that they should never, by any contingency of war, survive to reclaim their own.

It may be said that all those in whom Lopez, towards the last of his career, had most confidence gave him similar advice to that of Madam Lynch. Resquin, Aveiro, and his Bishop before he arrested him, all took advantage of his weakness to play upon his fears. This they did, in most cases, from pure selfishness, as in most cases they could have nothing personal against the people they accused and denounced. But so suspicious had Lopez become, that he distrusted all who did not accuse others. Every one about him, not excepting Madam Lynch, was in personal fear ; and as they all saw that those who were most forward in accusing others, and showed most alacrity in torturing them, stood highest in favor and most secure from arrest themselves, there was a rivalry among them in this infamous work. At one time Madam Lynch was for several days in constant dread lest she should share the fate of those whom she had caused to be sent to their final account. She had seen Barrios and Bruguez, and several others of those who but a few days before were the most devoted and apparently the most trusted officers taken off "to their destiny," and Lopez's elder sister had, to her own knowledge, been most cruelly tortured. At this time she could not conceal her fear lest she too might be a victim to the jealous, suspicious spirit she had done so much to arouse. Dr. Stewart having been called into her house one day, just after the arrest of Barrios, found her and the Bishop, and one or two others yet highest in favor, apparently in counsel. Fear and consternation was on every face, and the silence was broken by Madam Lynch's saying, "Who knows whose turn will come next?" Stewart, suspecting a trap, replied, "I don't know whose



it will be. I know that my conscience is clear, and nothing can touch me." They all sat silent for a few moments, each appearing afraid to speak, and Stewart withdrew, happy in the belief that he had said nothing which could be tortured to his prejudice. On another occasion, about this time, she remarked to one of her countrymen that she would give up everything she had in the world if she could only get safely out of Paraguay. She had good reason to be in fear for her own life. She knew people, men and women alike, were daily tortured to force them to accuse others. She knew, too, that she was bitterly hated by all the better class of Paraguayan women and most of the men, and why should not some of them in their agony make false accusations against her as well as against others? Might they not accuse her of being in the conspiracy? Possibly they did so; but if it were so the fact would only indicate that Lopez did not himself believe that there had ever been any, and that he tortured people, not for the purpose of getting evidence, but for amusement.

While events of this kind, of which we knew little or nothing, were transpiring at head-quarters, the work of implicating all of us still left in the Legation was going on. It was an essential part of the plan of Lopez that we should share the fate of the others whom he accused, for after he had taken such pains to prove a conspiracy it would never do to allow any one who could deny and disprove it to escape from his power. This was evident to us from the character of Benitez's letters; and as we saw that it was only a question of time whether one of us should ever get away from Paraguay, it was but natural that we should freely discuss the character of the allies, and the moral guilt of their generals in conducting a war in a manner that would lead to the inevitable extermination of the whole Paraguayan people.

With that peculiar chivalry characteristic of the Brazilians, they did not try to molest the Paraguayans, while they were endeavoring to make a "change of base." When Lopez abandoned Paso Pucu, Caxias did not learn of the evacuation for several days afterwards, but kept up a vigorous bombard-



ment till an enterprising pedler in pursuit of customers got inside of the abandoned fortifications, and, finding nobody there, went back and reported the fact, after which a gallant charge was made, the forts were carried at the point of the bayonet, and then the whole army joined in celebrating their great victory, and the commanding general despatched a steamer to bear the glad tidings to Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, and bring back the thanks of the Emperor and orders for promotion. At San Fernando the same miserable inaction and inattention to the movements of their enemy marked the course of the Brazilians. It seemed as if they dreaded to come in contact with the Paraguayans, no matter what the odds in their favor. After spending six months or more in investing the whole Paraguayan army, and with such a preponderance of men and guns that with a fair degree of energy and valor every man must either be killed or capitulate, they would allow them all to retire and carry their guns and ammunition with them. Then the Brazilians would prepare to follow them, and perhaps for another year repeat the long tedious work of again getting ready to attack in overwhelming force, at the end of which time they would find Lopez had again moved away, and that for months before he had been fortifying at another point, to which, before the Brazilians were ready for a general attack, he would fall back with his whole army. Thus it was at Itapiru, at Paso Pucu, at Humaita, and at San Fernando. At the latter place, though the allies had entire command of the river, and had a squadron lying below strong enough to have utterly destroyed the Spanish Armada of Philip the Second, and the whole army was gathering to overwhelm Lopez, yet he was permitted quietly to disarm the place and send all his guns and ammunition a hundred miles higher up the river, to be there again placed in position for another stand. The only thing he left was the telegraph, and an operator to work it, at the extreme southern point, where he could report the movements of the squadron below, and retire as soon as he saw that he and his Quaker guns would no longer keep it in check.



This dilatory conduct of the allies could cause nothing less than contempt in the mind of an impartial observer. The foreigners in Paraguay, however, were not impartial. They saw that they had no hope of deliverance from a horrible death except in the advance of the allies; and when year after year went by, their number each year becoming less, though they wished the Brazilians success they could never speak of them without the greatest contempt and bitterness. It seemed to them all that Lopez could not have held out so long against such odds unless it had been the policy of the allies, not so much to destroy him, as to give him time to exterminate all his people. That was the feeling of all in my house, and I gave expression to it in one of my letters to Benitez of the 11th of August: "The allies, however, with their large squadron, always kept at a safe distance, and, in my indignation at their mode of warfare, I remember to have said to Bergees it was cowardly, it was barbarous; that if they conquered Paraguay by fair fighting it would be legitimate warfare, but if they attempted to exhaust and starve out the people by means of superior numbers and resources, it was infamous, and deserved the execration of all civilized nations." This was certainly an opinion such as no minister of a neutral nation ever before expressed without being rebuked by his government; but as Lopez was torturing people to force them to declare that I was in correspondence with Caxias, receiving vast sums of money from his government, and was intending to destroy me so that I could never deny or disprove it, I thought it excusable for me, while I might, to express my personal opinion of Brazilian policy and Brazilian generalship.

The whole charge of a conspiracy was based on the assumption that the conspirators were in treaty with Caxias; that for a long time letters had been passing to and fro between him and them, generally through the American Legation and under the official seal of the Minister. What object was to be gained by prolonging it so was never explained by the witnesses before the "solemn tribunal." From the "declarations" sent to me, and from the numerous arrests, embracing all the men, foreign-



ers and natives alike, not in the army, besides many officers who were, it would appear that it was going on for at least a year and a half in a manner so open that it must have been exposed within a month after its inception in any country, and in Paraguay within twenty-four hours. The very absurdity of the whole scheme, and the inconsistencies and contradictions contained in the "declarations" of the victims, were enough to convince any man of ordinary intelligence that the conspiracy was only a phantom. But Lopez in many things was a fool, and could not or would not see that by his elaborate efforts to make it appear there was a conspiracy he was proving that there never had been anything of the kind. When in Benitez's letter of July 23 the charge was made that Mr. Bliss and others had signed a paper engaging themselves to each other to assassinate the President, I replied that I did not believe it; that Bliss positively denied having ever seen or heard of any such paper, and said if it could be produced he would instantly leave the Legation and deliver himself up to the Paraguayan authorities. I added that, if such a document were produced, it would clearly prove that while he was in my house, and living on my hospitality, he had betrayed my confidence, so that, while I should still insist on my rights of Legation, I should take good care that he fulfilled his promise to me. But no such paper was ever produced, and no allusion was made to it in the subsequent letters.

During the whole time that I was engaged in the correspondence with Benitez, in which he was trying to make it appear, on the evidence of tortured witnesses, that there had been a conspiracy, he never professed to be in possession of any document or paper prepared or signed by any of the accused. Nothing of the kind was ever published. Had Caxias, as was alleged, been holding correspondence for a year and a half with Benigno and Venancio Lopez, with Berges and Carreras, and the letters been passing back and forth during all that time, it would seem strange that not one of the conspirators who confessed to everything should have been able to tell where to find one of the original let-



ters. Berges alone said he had given his into my care. What became of those to Benigno, Venancio, and Carreras? Why was no one of them ever produced or published? As the houses of all the conspirators were searched, it is strange that no document or letter or writing of any kind was ever found that might have been published, and thus afford plenary evidence that a plot against the government had been discovered. But as there never was anything like a plot or conspiracy entered into by any persons in Paraguay, no such document could be found, and Lopez was left to the necessity of giving, in his own justification, the testimony extorted in such a way that it would prove nothing except his own inhuman practices.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Silence and Anxiety. — Reflections of Persons in Time of Danger. — Indications that Lopez's Plans are deranged. — Luis Caminos. — Lopez retires unmolested from San Fernando. — The French Chancellor accused. — Robbery of the National Treasury. — Lopez's Object. — Letter from Captain Kirkland. — The Delay explained. — Long Letter of Accusations from Caminos. — Passports promised to all but Bliss, Masterman, and Baltazar.

MORE than two weeks had elapsed since the date of my last letter to Benitez, in which for the third time I had asked for my passports and for the means of leaving the country. I cannot say that I was hoping to have my passports sent to me. My official relations would only be closed with their receipt; and as we were quite sure that Lopez would provide us no means of going away, and as it was impossible to reach the military lines of the allies by any other conveyance than such as he might furnish, our condition would be worse than ever, and the receipt of the passports would precede but a few hours the seizure of Bliss and Masterman, and but a few days that of all the rest of us. What I had so often asked for was just what, under the circumstances, I did not wish to get. The delay in answering my last note, however, was ominous of a long letter, and we had seen that the longer the letter the more outrageous the threatened act which it was intended to justify. It was not likely that Lopez would be longer baffled or put off by my elaborate disquisitions on international law. The issue was distinctly made up. I had said Bliss and Masterman were members of my Legation, and I would not give them up. He had declared that they were not, and he would take them. There was no occasion for further argument. Lopez must either carry out his threats or recede from his position. This delay in replying to my



note of the 11th of August had become so intolerable that Bliss and Masterman both said that, if Lopez were resolved to take them and kill them, they hoped he would do so at once, and put an end to the killing anxiety which they, as well as all the rest of us, were in. His most refined tortures, they imagined, must soon end, whereas the almost certainty that they were to be taken and subjected to them was wearing on their minds and weakening their bodies, and they longed to know the worst, dreadful as that worst was likely to be. Hope with them had died out, and if it had not entirely with me, it was because I had a premonition—I cannot call it a belief, nor a reason for a belief—that before Lopez should be ready to seize me a gunboat would come to my rescue.

It may be supposed that, situated as we were, with so slight a prospect of escape, and the conviction that we were all to be subjected to a horrible and infamous death, we should reflect whether we had in any way, through pride or folly or from any fault, brought ourselves into our present condition.

The thoughts that pass through the minds of persons under circumstances analogous to ours have been often related, as it has been no very rare thing for people to be saved from dangers after reason forbade them hope. The first reflection of persons so situated is one of self-examination. They ask themselves if they have brought the impending evils on themselves through any fault or folly of their own. We often thought of the different sensations that our friends must have experienced when undergoing the torture and when brought to face their executioners, and of how different it would all seem to a man of the noble character, the clear conscience, of Rodriguez, from what it would to others who by their own pride or ambition or partisan violence had courted their dreadful fate. For my own part, I could not see how any fault of mine had brought me into my critical situation. I could not accuse myself of being in the wrong in refusing to become the flatterer of Lopez, or in declining to defend and justify his atrocities. I had forced my way into his territory, where he held me



within his power, when to have turned back would have justly subjected me to the censure of my own government; and I had remained there while the dangers were thickening around me, at a time when I supposed I might have got away, solely that I might be of service to others. To save life I had risked my own, and not only my own, but the lives of those who were nearer and dearer to me than all the others for whose benefit I had remained. I had had a "divided duty," and had I not possibly erred in exposing those having the stronger claims upon me to the fate that now seemed almost inevitable? And yet I could not think it my duty, when so many others believed and felt that their safety, perhaps their lives, depended on my remaining, to turn my back upon them and leave them from motives purely personal and selfish. I therefore had nothing, so far as my official acts and my conduct towards the unhappy wretches around me who had been seized were concerned, to reproach myself for. Yet I had seen so much of the Jesuitical cunning and audacious mendacity of Lopez that I feared he would contrive a plausible story of conspiracy and revolution that should impose on the world the belief that I had confessed to acts dishonorable and infamous.

People who have never been put to the test find it hard to understand why persons who have been condemned to death are so anxious and earnest to have their names vindicated from unjust aspersions. It matters not whether the victim is a dethroned king like Charles I., or a fallen minister like Wolsey, a patriotic statesman like Algernon Sidney, a convicted highwayman, or a condemned murderer, he will to the last cry out against untrue and unjust accusations. Though admitting himself guilty of crimes which he ought to expiate by death, yet if accused of others of which he is innocent his last breath will be spent in protesting the fact. In my younger days I had wasted a good deal of time in writing a novel. It must have been a very poor novel, for few bought it and fewer read it. The hero of it is represented as having risked his life to defeat the capture of a shipload of fugitive slaves. He succeeds in this, though the fugitives, seeing him among the pursuers, be-



lieve that it is he who has betrayed them and given notice of their flight. He hears at a distance their curses and maledictions upon him at the moment he disables the pursuing vessel, knowing all the while his life will be the forfeit, and that both those whom he saved and those whom he balked will unite in rendering his name and memory infamous. I had never thought it would be my lot to perform an act in any degree like that, and yet it seemed that, without foreseeing it, I had put myself in a position to become the hero of my own novel. I alluded to this circumstance on one or two occasions to my companions, while we were yet together in the Legation, and, as will be seen hereafter, one of them while in prison repeated it in his confessions.

The delay in answering my last letters, that for a time we regarded as a bad omen, we afterwards regarded as a favorable indication. The very long hesitation of Lopez in carrying his threats into effect could only have been caused by something which had deranged his plans and made him pause.

Instead of the very long letter which I had been expecting, I was disappointed by receiving a very brief note signed by Luis Caminos, and informing me that he had been called to take the place of Benitez as Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs.

This Caminos had been Military Secretary of Lopez from the beginning of the war, and was one of those who seemed to participate the spirit of his master and to feel a positive delight in executing his cruel orders. Of those who had been in authority in and about Asuncion and Luque at the time the "conspirators" were arrested, the Chief of Police, Sanabria, only was now left. He was to follow them and share their fate soon after the arrival of Caminos. In Resquin's Diary his name appears in a list with forty-six other accused traitors who were executed on the 27th of September, only fifteen days after my departure from Paraguay. In this list is also to be found the names of Benitez and Carreras.

Caminos in this first letter requested me to send him a list



of the persons for whom I demanded passports. I replied on the same day, giving the list, including in it, of course, the names of Bliss and Masterman. The next day I learned that Lopez was abandoning San Fernando with his army, and that he was fortifying himself at Angostura and Villeta. It appeared from this that the Brazilians, with their usual torpidity and imbecility, had allowed him to repeat the part he had played at Itapiru and Paso Pucu ; and that, while they were engaged in making great preparations to attack him, he had withdrawn his army, his guns, and in fact all his force, to some point higher up the river, where he had already thrown up the necessary earthworks. It seemed probable, that, as he was being driven nearer Asuncion, he found my remaining there more inconvenient to the execution of his plans, and perhaps he had desired this list as preliminary to some extraordinary action. Yet it might be that a gunboat had arrived ; and this hope, which was indeed very faint, led us to regard the request of Caminos for a list as a favorable sign.

On the 31st the French and Italian Consuls came in from Luque and called at my house. They told me that the Chancellor of the French Consulate, M. Libertat, was accused of being a fellow-conspirator with Bliss and others, and of having signed the same document in which they had all agreed to assassinate Lopez, if necessary, to effect their plans. It was from them I learned that there was no official in what was then called the capital, Luque, above the grade of Chief of Police, whose rank was that of captain in the army, — no civil officer whatever. The old Vice-President, Sanchez, had gone below ; so had Benitez, and Ortellado, and the priest Bogado, all of whom had so eloquently denounced the conspiracy at the grand celebration in Luque, soon after the arrest at that place of nearly all the civil officers of the government.

For the first time I now heard that the national treasury had been robbed ; that on moving the treasure supposed to be in it from the old to the new capital a great deficit had been discovered, and that all who had had anything to do with that department were in disgrace and were prisoners. How under



such a government as that of Lopez the treasury could have been robbed, it was impossible for me to conceive ; nor did I then see the object of publishing to the world such a statement. But I was soon to learn that the opening and searching of the houses of all the people in the capital who it was supposed had money or jewels to any considerable amount was but a part of a device of a pretended robbery of the treasury, and that the owners of these houses had all been accused of being engaged in that great robbery, and the money which they had upon their premises was declared to be a part of the plunder which they had stolen. Of course, being accused of a crime like that, it was necessary for Lopez to put them all to death, lest if any of them should escape they would deny that they ever had anything in their possession which was not legally and rightfully theirs ; and the foreigners, should they survive, would appeal to their governments to compel Lopez to make restitution. It was a necessity of the first crime, if he would succeed in it, that he should practise on the principle of the footpad and the midnight assassin, that "dead men tell no tales."

On the 2d of September, while we were yet debating in regard to the object of Lopez in asking for the list of the *personnel* of the Legation, the same soldier who had brought us so many letters of portentous import appeared with one of a different character. It was from Commander Kirkland. The Wasp had returned ; and the mystery of the long delay in answering my last letters was explained. She had reached the lower fortifications of Lopez, at the mouth of the Tebicuari, and was then waiting for permission to proceed higher up the river. Kirkland wrote that he had come to take me and my family away, if we wished to leave. He complained that he had been treated with great discourtesy by Lopez, who had not replied to his letters, and that he knew not where I was or where Lopez was, or where it would be convenient for me to embark. I immediately answered this letter, telling him that I would be ready to embark at any moment ; and as it would suit my convenience to do



so at Asuncion, he would oblige me by coming up to that point.

This letter I sent to Caminos to be forwarded, at the same time sending him a note advising him of the arrival of the Wasp and of its object in coming there. I also gave him the purport of my letter to Captain Kirkland.

For two days I heard nothing either from Kirkland or Caminos, but late in the evening of the 4th I received another letter from the former, stating that he was lying two leagues below Villeta, but that he could not learn where I was, or where the President was, as he had not answered his letters, though he had written him three times officially, and that his conduct in treating him thus was very disrespectful and discourteous, and requesting me to so represent to his Excellency. It was clear from this that Captain Kirkland knew nothing of our situation, or of what had transpired during the few preceding months in Paraguay; and we all felt that our troubles were not yet over, and that Lopez was hesitating whether to detain us or to let us go. On the morning of the 5th, however, I received a very long letter from Caminos, much longer than any that I had ever received from the unfortunate Benitez. It consisted of forty pages of closely written official paper. This letter had evidently been prepared before the arrival of the Wasp, and while it was the intention of Lopez to treat us as he had Carreras, Rodriguez, and Pereira. It was written in the same style and in similar phraseology to those signed by Benitez. Who had written all these letters was a matter of frequent discussion with us. They showed a Jesuitical cunning worthy of Lopez, but they displayed a talent for writing and an intellectual capacity so far above his mental powers that we ascribed their composition to either the old Vice-President Sanchez or Padre Maiz. Benitez was already in disgrace, and could not have written this last one; and it was therefore clear that, though he had signed the preceding, an abler pen than his had written them.

Caminos had no pretensions to be anything but a head spy of Lopez, and from his alacrity in carrying into effect his



cruel orders still appeared to retain the confidence of his master. Next to Lopez himself and Madam Lynch, he had probably been more successful in obtaining the hatred of all, foreigners and natives alike, than anybody else in Paraguay. His character was so atrocious and detestable that it must have been apparent to Lopez, that, whatever might be his own fate, Caminos would share it ; that he would never dare to betray him or desert to the allies, for no service of that kind could save him from the thousand daggers which had been whetted alike for him and for Lopez. This letter concluded with another recapitulation of my offences in still retaining Bliss and Masterman, and asserting and reasserting that they were not, and never had been, members of my Legation ; that they were criminals and conspirators, and the government had a perfect right to take them and treat them as it did other criminals. To my proposition, that, if Bliss and Masterman could be useful to the government in ascertaining the truth in regard to the conspiracy, they were perfectly willing to give their testimony if a notary would come to my house to receive it, the reply was that it would be beneath the dignity of the government to do so, and that it would not hesitate in making them appear before the tribunal, for the reason that they were merely refugees in my house. To my statement that I was bound to regard Bliss and Masterman innocent until I had some proof of their guilt, and that as I knew the statements of the declarations in regard to me were all false I had a right to presume that those made against Bliss and Masterman were equally so, the reply was substantially that no further evidence of their guilt would be given me ; that I was bound to take the word of the government, and the depositions of witnesses which they had furnished me, in regard to their guilt, as sufficient proof, and therefore no attention would be paid to the maxim of the common law to which I had referred, that every person was to be considered innocent until proved guilty. In this letter Caminos inadvertently showed that the letter had not been written by himself, but had been prepared by the same hand that had



dictated the others, as he alludes to the fact that I did not credit *his* words. As this was the first letter I received from him, I never could have expressed or shown any doubts in regard to his official statements; and this charge against me proved conclusively that it had been written before the Wasp had arrived, and when the writer supposed Benitez was to sign it. This was also evident from the following words, which elsewhere appeared in the letter: "I cannot, however, conceive how your own convenience is incompatible with the expulsion of these individuals, whereas their stay there must give rise to very unsatisfactory apprehensions, from the fact of their being implicated in a vast conspiracy, the depositions in regard to which affect even your Excellency." Of course nothing of this kind would have been written had Lopez suspected the question was to be solved by my going away on a vessel that had already arrived.

The letter proceeded to adduce the further proofs of my own complicity with Bliss, Masterman, and the other conspirators. The first witness whose testimony was given was Benigno Lopez, the President's younger brother. This testimony was principally made up of general conversations which Benigno averred he had held with me from time to time for two or three years before; in fact, that he had been in the most intimate relations with me, and had held confidential conversations with me, at a time when I had not even a speaking acquaintance with him. That this declaration might carry conviction to persons beyond the limits of Paraguay, the same particularity, the same fulness of detail, which appeared in the declaration of Berges in regard to his treasonable papers and his various conversations with me, were observed. Of course this device was resorted to to convince others, as the setting forth of transactions and conversations of a purely imaginary character could have no other effect upon me than to show the audacious mendacity of Lopez and his despicable character, and it is evident that it had been prepared with the view that I should not survive to expose it; and though the Wasp was in the river when the despatch was



sent to me, I am fully persuaded that even to that time Lopez was determined that I should not escape from his power. Benigno then continues, repeating many conversations in which he said the plan of the conspiracy was talked over, and I had informed him of my intimate relations with Caxias, that I was having everything arranged so that, when the blow should be struck, the revolution might be successful. He states that, in order to induce me to engage in the conspiracy and to persist in rendering all the assistance in my power, he himself had advanced me a large sum of money from his own fortune, and I was also receiving money to a large extent from the Marques de Caxias ; so that, on the whole, it would seem that I was in a good way to become a millionaire. Besides this I had assured him that if the revolution should succeed, and the new government be installed, I would instantly recognize it as the government of Paraguay, as I had already advised the State Department at Washington that such would be the case, and I was sure it would support me in that proceeding, and accept of the revolutionary government as the legal authority of the country. In putting this statement in the declaration of his unhappy brother, Lopez did not exhibit his usual cunning ; for though at the time it was written he did not intend that I should ever live to disprove it, yet, if it were published, its falsity would be proved by the fact that no such despatches had ever been received at Washington.

Besides the testimony of Benigno, that of Venancio Lopez, the other brother, was brought forward. He also is made to report a great many conversations that he had with me about the revolution. These conversations were related very minutely, and showed the same Jesuitical cunning as in the other cases. Venancio was also made to say that he had been in correspondence with Caxias, and that I had forwarded his letters and received the answers thereto ; that, in fact, I had been the principal promoter of the revolution, and that it had been through my proposition that he had been seduced into the wicked plot. Otherwise than this, his deposition contained little except reports of conversations, which were



given in detail, clearly that they might on the face bear the evidence of reality. The deposition of another witness whose name had not before appeared in the correspondence was now produced. This was José Vicente Urdapilleta, who had been from an early period of the war the nominal chief-justice of Paraguay. His testimony contained nothing of importance except what had been stated by the others, and evidently was intended to appear beyond the limits of Paraguay as cumulative proof that a conspiracy had really existed. Besides these Paraguayans, poor Rodriguez and Carreras were brought forward again, and the testimony as given by Rodriguez, if he ever gave it, must have been given with a grim smile, even though it were forced from him while he was in the *cepo uruguayana*, and every word extorted with a blow ; for in this he is made to say that the women-servants of Benigno had brought to my house in big baskets, on their heads, Paraguayan currency to the amount of one hundred and forty thousand dollars, and that of this sum I had offered him and Carreras forty thousand dollars, but that they had declined to accept it, having no way of investing it to advantage. Had the two servants, as he testifies, brought one hundred and forty thousand dollars of Paraguayan money, in such notes as were circulated there, in baskets on their heads, they must have had loads as large as a moderate sized hay-stack ; and as no Paraguayan at that time could carry a bundle two squares without being overhauled by the police and the contents of the bundle investigated, the ridiculous absurdity of the story must have amused Rodriguez, no matter how miserable might have been his situation. The story appears more ridiculous from the fact that neither Rodriguez nor myself, nor anybody else, considered that the Paraguayan paper money, if the war should end, as we then supposed it would, with the destruction of Lopez, would be worth anything more than its value for waste paper. I certainly considered it would be of as little value as was the Confederate money at that time in Virginia or Alabama.

In fact, I do not suppose that Rodriguez ever made any such



statement, for he had certainly been executed some weeks before that time. The testimony in this letter concludes with another statement from Carreras, in which he says that not only was I the chief of the conspirators, but that I "approved the plan of the revolution, and took part in it to overturn the Marshal by hunger or by the dagger." With a cunning stroke, which was evidently intended to enlist again in the cause of Lopez the eminent counsel who had been employed in Washington at the time of the convention in 1859, another declaration is given from Berges to the effect that I had said that I ought to receive, in compensation for my services in the revolution, as much as had the secretary of Commissioner Bowlin, or the counsel for Paraguay, Mr. Carlisle. This much of the letter bears internal evidence of having been written before the news of the arrival of the Wasp had been received, and with the intention of giving it a different ending from that which was really given. At the time it was in preparation those Englishmen and others who were nearest Lopez and knew most of his thoughts and intentions, and who have since escaped from his power, were daily expecting, as they have since informed me, to hear that the Legation had been violated and all of us made prisoners, and they were at that very time expecting every hour to hear that I had been brought a prisoner to head-quarters.

The plan of Lopez, so far as those around him could infer, and as is shown by the character of his last letter, was to have concluded it with the declaration, that, as I had refused to deliver up Bliss and Masterman, they would be taken by force; that communications were still passing between me and the enemy; and, as the safety of the Republic would not permit it any longer, that Bliss and Masterman must appear before the tribunal and give in their evidence.

Of course they would have been made to declare whatever Lopez wished to extort from them; if they would not do it without torture they must do it with; and if they should die under the *proceso* before giving it the declarations would have been produced all the same as having been made by them, and



would have been to the effect, that to the last moment of their stay in my house I was still holding frequent correspondence with the enemy. Another letter from Caminos would have followed soon after, containing their declarations, and would have concluded by saying that a person so hostile to the Republic and so dangerous to its safety would no longer be permitted to remain at liberty. My arrest would have followed immediately, and, having committed that outrage on the American government, Lopez knew that the only way to ward off its natural consequences was to take such measures as would prevent any version of his acts except his own from ever seeing the light. To have carried out this plan would require the destruction of a great many other people ; it would certainly involve that of all the foreigners who were immediately around Lopez ; and Drs. Stewart and Skinner, Colonel Thompson, Burrell, Valpy, and the other English, considered that, if Lopez once laid his hands upon me, he would immediately put them out of the world, lest through chance of war some of them might escape to tell the tragic story. Of the presence of Parodi, who was in an extremely feeble state of health, he might soon have been relieved by a natural death ; while of myself it was his plan to have an infamous declaration made, admitting everything that had been asserted by the others, and force me to sign it ; and if I refused, my fingers would have been jammed to pieces, as had been those of poor Carreras, and then I might have been exposed, as was the French Consul, M. Cochelet, to be taken off by a shot from the enemy, or some other *accident* must have been improvised. But the probability is that my confession would have contained a statement, that, having been detected in an infamous plan to overthrow the government and to assassinate the great and good Lopez, who had treated me with the highest indulgence and consideration from my first entrance into Paraguay till that moment, my mortification and remorse were such that I could not longer endure life, and therefore I had resolved to commit suicide. Of course the parties assisting me in the self-murder would immediately after have been ex-



ecuted on some other charge, and Lopez and Madam Lynch would have shed crocodile tears over the unfortunate accident, or over my still more unfortunate resolution which had driven me to suicide at a time when, notwithstanding my crime, Lopez was abounding in charity and kindness towards me, and, great as had been my offence, would have done nothing against a representative of the United States.

But the arrival of the Wasp just at this time, when the letter was already written announcing his determination to take the last but one fatal step, deranged his plans. The whole army knew that he was meditating extreme measures against me ; they knew too that nothing had yet been done ; that I was still at liberty when Lopez received the unwelcome news that the stars and stripes were to be seen above the blockading squadron ; and in the chances of battles which would occur it was impossible but that many should escape who would report these facts, so that if he committed any violence against me it would be known by the government of the United States. It was then too late for the planned accident to happen to me, or a confession to be published, for it would be evident to every one that all had been done after the arrival of the Wasp in Paraguayan waters ; and Lopez knew that the protest that the safety of the Republic required my arrest would never be admitted by the United States government when it had a steamer there ready to take me away. The letter, therefore, which had been prepared while Caminos was yet at head-quarters, and brought by him when he came to Asuncion to superintend the seizure of the inmates of my house, was returned to Lopez to be altered so as to meet the changed circumstances. Instead of closing with the announcement that Bliss and Masterman were to be taken by force, it concluded, after a recital of my offences as before written, in these words : " Notwithstanding all this, and notwithstanding the circumstances which your Excellency is aware would have justified my government in breaking off some time ago all intercourse with a Minister who, in the critical circumstances through which the people of Paraguay are



passing, figures in the testimony of the infamous traitors to the country as being one of themselves, my government, anxious to give the most unequivocal proofs of its high consideration and regard towards the government of the great American Republic, has done no such thing, and only confines itself to sending your Excellency the passports which you have repeatedly solicited in order to leave the country ; and I am happy to inform you that the Wasp, which has come to take your Excellency away, is waiting for you in Villeta, and that a steamer will be in readiness in the port of Asuncion for you and your suite." To this was added, that among the individuals whose names were in the passports that would be sent me those of Bliss and Masterman would not be included ; that "they must remain to answer the charges hanging over them before the local courts of justice." Neither could Baltazar, the servant of Carreras, be permitted to leave the country, and therefore his name was not included in the passports.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

The Situation of the Wasp. — The Wild Beast in his Cage. — Anxious Conferences. — Unanimity in the Plan of Escape. — Money, etc., left in the Legation. — Some of the English withdraw theirs. — Dispute with Caminos in regard to Property left in the Legation. — Not allowed to take any Property but my own aboard the Paraguayan Steamer. — Further Delays. — Indications that Lopez still intends to keep us Prisoners. — Danger in taking away Masterman's Property. — My Baggage opened and examined. — A Fruitless Search. — Another Letter from Kirkland. — Mrs. Leite Pereira. — Antonio Jara. — The Legation Premises left in Charge of the Italian Consul. — Basilio. — Parting Interview. — Departure from the Legation. — Arrest of Bliss, Masterman, and Baltazar. — Fears of the Consuls for their own Safety. — Mr. Hunter and the Money of the English. — The Paraguayan Steamer. — The Wasp.

THE letter of Caminos we all regarded as little better than the death-warrant of Bliss and Masterman. The Wasp would not be allowed to come near enough for me to communicate with her commander before embarking, nor could I send him a letter containing an account of the recent proceedings and of our dangerous situation without its passing through the hands of Lopez, and being probably read by him. The little fort that had frightened away the two invulnerable iron-clads of the Brazilians was between us and the Wasp, and she could not get above it without the permission of Lopez. Had she come to Asuncion, and could I have got on board with my wife and child, he would hardly have dared to offer violence to Bliss and Masterman, or to attempt to detain them. Had he done so, he probably foresaw that I should have demanded their instant release, and if refused should have advised Commander Kirkland to knock down his new palace. Whether the latter would have taken my advice I have since had reason to doubt. The Wasp could have done it, however, without exposing herself to any danger. Lopez had



no steamers left except three or four very small and rickety affairs, either of which the Wasp could have easily destroyed by a single shot. But the Wasp could not have returned to Buenos Aires so long as the batteries of Lopez commanded the river between Asuncion and the Tebicuari. There was no obstacle in the way above Asuncion, and she could have gone to Matto Grosso without difficulty, as the wood necessary for fuel could have been readily obtained on the banks of the river, and the steamer would have been welcomed as a deliverer by the people of Matto Grosso, who would have cheerfully supplied all the provisions needed before the river might be cleared and she could return to Buenos Aires. Lopez had doubtless foreseen that we should have him at a disadvantage if the Wasp were to come to Asuncion, and that the outrage on the Legation which he was still resolved upon would be resented then and there. Besides this, if the Wasp were to proceed to Matto Grosso she would carry the news that there were no men in Paraguay between Asuncion and the northern frontier, and Lopez had no troops that he could send to defend that region, as a small force could easily take and hold the entire country and cut off all supplies for the army. His refusal, therefore, to permit the gunboat to come to Asuncion did not surprise us, but it was a death-blow to the recently revived hopes of Bliss and Masterman that they would be rescued.

We now all consulted most anxiously together, and considered what it was best to do. All concurred in the opinion that, situated as we were, it would be worse than folly to delay to argue the question of their status in the Legation, or protest against their detention. They knew that without some display of power which I could not command they would never be permitted to leave the country, and it was yet far from certain that I would get away. It was clear that the plans of Lopez had been disconcerted; but we all knew how reluctant he was to allow anybody whom he had devoted to destruction to escape from his power, and that even with a gunboat near the greatest circumspection must be observed lest he should, notwithstanding that, carry into effect his previous resolution



towards me. My own situation may be properly compared to that of a man with two companions within the den of a lion, confronting the angry beast, which is standing with flashing eye, gnashing his teeth and lashing his body with his tail, his eye fixed upon the central person, but held in check, and not venturing to spring so long as the eye of the man is fixed steadily upon him. To advance upon the beast is to invite inevitable destruction to all; the only possible way of escape is to withdraw gradually and cautiously, keeping the eye always fixed, and watchful of every motion of the enraged animal. And if by this means the entrance to the cage may be passed and the bar replaced, perhaps relief may come to the others before they are all torn in pieces. This was my situation; I saw that I must watch with the greatest circumspection every movement that was made from that hour. I believed that on the least pretence Lopez would detain me, and as I knew that his *civil processes*, as he called them, were very long, and it was his custom to prolong the lives of those whom he had resolved to murder, I thought it possible that if I should give the alarm in regard to Bliss and Masterman, an American squadron might come to their relief before he had consummated his plans in respect to them. They fully concurred in this opinion. They felt that their only possible chance of escape consisted in my getting away; for if I were detained, of course there would be no hope for them. They were even more anxious than I lest, inadvertently, I should take some step that might further enrage Lopez, or give him some advantage or pretext for detaining me.

I immediately answered Caminos's letter, stating that I was prepared to leave immediately, and should accept of his offer to depart on the following morning on the Paraguayan steamer to Villeta. I stated that I had a considerable amount of money which had been left in my charge by various parties, mostly Englishmen in the employ of the government, who had requested me, in case I should leave Paraguay, to take it with me and deposit it to their credit in Buenos Aires. This



money was nearly all in silver dollars, and consequently both heavy and cumbersome. I could not take it away without the knowledge and assistance of Lopez, and there was a law of the country that no specie should be exported without the payment of ten per cent export tax. If I attempted to take that money away in the boxes I knew that it would be stopped, and probably confiscated, and that I should be accused of attempting to take away the money of other people illegally. And it would be as easy to charge that these boxes were all full of doubloons, which I received from the conspirators, as it had been to make a thousand other accusations which had their origin in the mind of Lopez. Nevertheless, as the owners of this money were mostly the employees of the government, whose services were of great importance to Lopez, and who up to that time were supposed to be in his favor, perhaps to oblige them he would allow me to take the money away. I therefore advised Caminos of the fact that it was in my house, and that the owners had expressed a wish that I should take it out of the country, which I would gladly do, provided no objection were made by the government.

In answer to this Caminos requested a list of the names of persons who had money in my possession, and of the amount. As it had been brought at various times, and I had given no receipt for it, and had kept no list or memorandum of it, I could answer his questions only so far as to give the names upon the different bags and boxes, and in those cases where the amount was not marked to give the weight. With two exceptions all were English. But I received no such permission to take away their money as I had expected, but got letters from most of them requesting me to deliver whatever they had in my possession to the bearers of their letters. The money was accordingly delivered in most cases, though not in all I had instanced. From Dr. Skinner I received a letter requesting me to take away his money for him. From Dr. Stewart I heard nothing, though I advised the government that I had a large box belonging to him, containing, as I sup-



posed, a considerable quantity of silver. The money which I particularly requested to take away with me belonged to foreigners, and it had been given into my charge with the request that I would send it out of the country at the first opportunity. There were besides this in my house a great many trunks and boxes, and several iron safes, the contents of which were unknown to me. These I had not even been requested to take away, and were I to do it, and Lopez should find that it had slipped through his fingers, he would say that it had been done through the connivance of the owners and at their request, and it would be fatal to them. I did not then know that many of them had been already killed. There was one trunk in particular which I was greatly tempted to carry with me; it belonged to Doña Carmelita Cordal, of whom I have before spoken. She had a considerable amount of silver money and a large quantity of jewelry, which, before the time of the evacuation, she had sent to my house. After the evacuation she had sent me the key to the box containing these treasures, requesting me to send her certain things which it contained. I therefore was well informed of the contents of this chest, and I was sorely tempted to try to smuggle away the box of jewelry. I am afraid I should have violated the laws of Paraguay by doing so, had I not feared that she would be tortured and executed for my offence in saving her money from the grasp of Lopez and Madam Lynch. I anticipated that as soon as I left the house it would be immediately searched by the myrmidons of Lopez; and should it be discovered that her valuables were not there, she would be taken before the tribunal and questioned in regard to the large amount of diamonds and valuable jewels which she was known to possess. She could then only plead that I had taken them away without her authority. That, however, though perfectly true, I knew would never suffice with a person so greedy as Madam Lynch. She would be accused of having sent them away by me, and I did not doubt that she would be tortured until she could stand it no longer and then executed. I fully believed she would gladly have given



seventy per cent of her treasures to secure the balance, yet I feared that by saving the whole I should be doing an act that would be fatal to her.

I saw that the possession of property belonging to other people was liable to cause me great difficulty. Caminos had many questions to ask about it, and the notes passed between us at the rate of two a day, and I found I could do nothing or propose nothing that was acceptable. But I disclaimed all responsibility for the property in my possession, and said I had taken it at the risk of the owners, and told them that I should not be responsible for it in any way, and that, as I had received my passports, I wanted the means of leaving the country. Then, as every pretext for further delay in regard to the property of foreigners in my possession had been exhausted, I received another note, in which I was requested to delay my departure until the Paraguayans who had deposited their valuables in my house could have time to come and take them away. To this I replied that I would not wait a single hour for that purpose; the government had known for several days that I was intending to leave, and the Wasp was then waiting for me, and it could have advised these Paraguayans long before of that fact, and that they should come and remove their property. Many of the foreigners having property with me had come and taken it away, but not a single Paraguayan had done so, and if I acceded to a request of that kind it might be weeks, or months even, before I should get away. I therefore should listen to no such proposition. I had been told a week before that a steamer would be at my disposal to take me as soon as I was ready, and I had been ready ever since. The deposits I had belonging to Paraguayans, and which I should be obliged to leave there, could still be delivered to the owners whenever they wished, as I should leave the keys of my house with a responsible party, and whenever the owners chose to come for their property they could obtain it as well as if I were there. I had already sent aboard the most of my luggage, supposing that we were to follow it immediately, and we were left there in the house



without many things absolutely necessary for health and convenience.

With my own baggage I had sent that of Mr. Bliss and Mr. Masterman, and that of the latter gave me more alarm than anything else. All the property which he had in the world was contained in the trunks and boxes which I had sent aboard the Paraguayan steamer. I was very much averse to taking this property away, for I could see that Lopez was still hesitating whether he would let me go or not, and was watching for any pretext to detain me, and I feared that at the last moment I should be met with the accusation of attempting to carry away the property of criminals and conspirators, and it would be alleged that the trunks of Masterman contained the proofs of the conspiracy and of the part which he and I and others had taken in it. On some pretext of this kind I feared that they would be seized, and that I also should be detained until further investigation could be had. Such detention I knew would be perpetual, and it was with the greatest reluctance that I consented to incur the risk of carrying this property away. But the appeal of Masterman was so piteous, and his desire that what he had might be saved, if not to himself, to his family, was so great that I finally promised to take it all away. But that I might have an answer ready, if it should be seized, he wrote me a letter making a free gift of it to me as a compensation for the kindness and hospitality I had shown him from the time I had rescued him from prison until that date. With this document, if the property were seized, I could show that I had nothing which belonged to Mr. Masterman; that everything which I had that was once his had been made over to me formally as my property. In one of these chests of Masterman was a bag containing one hundred silver dollars, as he told me, which he wished, whether he survived or not, to be forwarded to that friend of his, a Paraguayan, who had supplied him with food during his long imprisonment.

My trunks and boxes were on board the Paraguayan steamer for some four or five days before I was allowed to follow them,



and in that time they were opened and searched, though evidently great pains were taken to prevent it from being discovered. Notwithstanding all precautions, a single circumstance disclosed the fact that they had been opened. It could hardly be that Lopez, if he ever had believed in a conspiracy, was not convinced before this time that nothing of the kind had ever existed. But if he still believed in it, and thought to find some of the fabulous wealth that his witnesses before the solemn tribunal had testified that I had received from Caxias, Benigno, and others, he must have been greatly disappointed in finding none of the many thousand doubloons in my baggage. Masterman had marked this bag with the name of the person for whom it was intended. He told me that, if I should ever get out of the country and he should not, he wished that money to be sent to this person, provided I should ever have the opportunity. But from the fact that when the chest reached Buenos Aires, he, upon opening it after his escape, found that money missing, I am led to infer that everything which I had sent on board the steamer had been, during the four or five days' delay that intervened between the time of its being sent aboard and my departure, opened to ascertain whether I was taking away anything of a contraband nature. I had taken it for granted that this would be done, but as I had nothing in my possession but my own manuscripts which I was not perfectly willing that Lopez himself should see, I did not care how closely this part of my baggage was examined. My manuscripts, about which I had been so anxious, I kept back, and had them in my other trunks, which did not leave the house till I was about to go on board the steamer. But these trunks were so very light that a Paraguayan woman could easily have carried either one of them on her head from the Legation to the bank of the river, and from this circumstance, which was doubtless instantly reported to Lopez by telegraph, it must have been evident to him that, however full they might be of treason, they did not contain any considerable amount of silver or gold. Most of the English took away their money; but as several did not do so I advised Caminos of the fact,



and stated that as they had not removed it, but had previously requested me to take it in case I should go myself, I proposed to do so. To this I never got any written answer; but the Italian Consul, who came in the day before I left, told me that Caminos had informed him that the government would not permit me to take away any money from my house. I could not get it out of the country without having, not only the permission of Lopez, but his assistance in getting it aboard the steamer, and therefore I must either abandon it or remain there to keep guard over it.

Though I repeatedly reminded Caminos that we were ready to depart; that, our baggage having gone aboard, we were very uncomfortable in the house, and that I had no further business to detain me, yet I received no notice that the Paraguayan steamer was prepared to take me on board. I now observed that the guards about my house were very much strengthened, and as the darkness shut down on the evening of the 8th I saw that soldiers were posted around the house at a distance of about two rods from each other. The object of this I could not understand at the time, but regarded it as an indication that something of a very disagreeable nature would soon occur. But a letter which I received from Commander Kirkland the next day, September 8, explained why this extra precaution had been taken. The letter was dated near Lambaré, a point less than two leagues from the capital, and it appeared as though Lopez was afraid that an attempt would be made to rescue us all by force. However, the *Wasp* did not come any higher up, and remained only a few hours at that place, when she returned and anchored opposite Villeta. She had only moved higher up in order to be out of the way of the shots from the Brazilian vessels that were bombarding the Paraguayan fortifications at Villeta. Supposing that the *Wasp* was still at Lambaré, my poor wife, who by this time was getting more alarmed than ever, urged that we should start on horseback and leave everything behind us. But she little knew the difficulties which we should have to encounter. I knew that if Lopez was determined to



detain us we should not escape in any such way, and that if he did allow us to leave he would furnish us with such facilities that he could parade his magnanimity as a signal proof of his respect for the laws of nations, and his consideration especially for the United States.

The presence of the wife of Leite Pereira in our house now caused us a great deal of embarrassment. She could not leave Paraguay, and she feared to attempt to return to her house in the country lest she might be immediately arrested and sent to prison. I therefore was compelled to intercede for her and obtain her a passport for the interior, which, after much vexation and delay, I succeeded in doing, where I sent her on horseback, accompanied by my ever-faithful Basilio. Her hopelessness and misery at leaving us were very affecting. The anxious days and nights which she had passed with us since the arrest of her husband completely prostrated her, and she could see nothing but greater suffering and misery before her. Her departure was a relief to us, for her constant lamentations and her distraught appearance only added to the afflictions and misery of others, and were fast reducing them to a state of despair as dark as her own.

On the 8th I received a letter from another person, which led me to infer that Lopez, having failed to find any pretext for detaining me from the correspondence which we had had in regard to the property left in my charge by other people, was trying to make some other accusation or excuse for keeping me in the country. It was a letter from the Chief of Police, enclosing another from the same Captain Antonio Jara who had before claimed to be the owner of the premises we occupied, and of Basilio, who had been a slave of the former owner of the house, Don Luis Jara. In this letter he inquired whether I was going to pay him for the rent of the house, and also if I proposed to take away his slave Basilio. I made no reply to this, though I sent a note to the Chief of Police, telling him that I had received a note from a person, who said his name was Captain Antonio Jara; that the former owner of the house, Don Luis, had told me to take



possession of it, to occupy it as long as I desired, and to make use of whatever I found in it, and that he should ask neither rent nor compensation of any kind ; that since that he had died and had left no legal or legitimate heirs, as he had never been married ; therefore I did not know why he should molest me by sending me letters from such a person, whose rights to the property I had no knowledge of and could not recognize.

Late in the same day I received another letter from Caminos of a more amiable tone, and, comparing dates, I found that Lopez had had, since the preceding letter, an interview with Commander Kirkland, and after that interview had concluded to let me go. Having made up his mind to this, it would appear that he had concluded to put no further obstacles in my way, or do anything more to aggravate me or give ground of complaint against him to my government. He had tried very hard to embarrass me in regard to the archives of the Legation. I did not propose to take them all away, as many of the Patent Office Reports, the Agricultural Reports, and other rubbish which our Congress for inexplicable reasons has been in the habit of publishing and sending abroad, I did not consider worth the freight ; and besides, if I attempted to carry them away, from their great weight Lopez would suspect that the box containing them held money, and would cause me further delay until he could contrive to have the box opened, the contents examined, and then closed again, so as not to show that they had been tampered with. The records of the Legation, the official correspondence, and everything of any considerable value I took ; but in regard to the other things I simply said I should leave them in my house, and also the property of those Paraguayans and others who had left anything with me, and which I could not carry away, and that the government could take its own course in regard to them after I was gone. I could do nothing further. This plan being objected to by Caminos, I then requested the Italian Consul, Lorenzo Chapperon, to accept the charge of them and to receive the keys of my house when I should leave it. He engaged to do so, and on the 9th he and the French Consul



came up and remained until my departure on the following day. I had hoped to leave on that day, as the indications were that our detention would not long be continued. We had nothing in the house to eat, and I complained to Caminos of our condition there; that, as our baggage was aboard the Paraguayan steamer, and we had been notified that she was soon to depart, we had obtained no provisions from beyond the city limits, and were exposed to great inconvenience and should soon be in absolute want. Another excuse for a longer detention which was sent on the 9th was, that it had not been convenient to put my remaining trunks on board the boat because it was raining. Early the next morning I therefore sent a very urgent note, telling Caminos that we were all ready, and I should expect and hope to be on board the steamer at an early hour and on my way down the river. I soon received an answer, telling me that the little steamer Rio Apa would be ready to leave as soon as we could embark. A cart was also sent to take away such effects as we had not already sent off. At eleven o'clock we started from the house; and as we left our poor Paraguayan servants seemed abandoned to despair. I would gladly have taken them all, and so I told Basilio; but he said it would be worse than useless for me to try to take him away, as he would not be allowed to go, and I had better not claim him as belonging to my Legation. He begged me, if I ever returned to Paraguay, to inquire for him and of his fate. He feared that he would be sent to this Antonio Jara, and subjected to the most cruel treatment. I told him he would doubtless be taken as a soldier, but I hoped nothing worse than that would come upon him. He said that was nothing, he was willing to go as a soldier, but that it was the flogging and the torture that he dreaded. What became of him I have never learned.

That day, very early in the morning, the house had been surrounded by a large force of police and soldiers. Directly in front were standing all the time as many as twenty persons, two or three mounted; and at each corner there were eight or ten more. I again told Bliss and Masterman that they had



my free permission to say anything about me that could save them from torture or prolong their lives. I said to them substantially these words : We have all seen how Carreras, Rodriguez, Berges, Benigno, and the others who have been taken, have made declarations against us all that are entirely false, that have no foundation whatever. We know that the declarations which have been given in the letters of Benitez as coming from them were never made by them, or that, if they were made, they must have been previously subjected to the most terrible tortures. That there is not a particle of truth in them we all know. You will be taken, very likely, and tortured until you will corroborate what they have said. Now you have my permission to say anything against me ; you will not hesitate to save yourselves by admitting everything true or false which you may find Lopez is determined you shall admit. You may accuse me, if you can save your lives by it, of any crime you can imagine ; you may charge me with sorcery, or stealing sheep, or anything else. Nobody will believe it in Paraguay, and certainly nobody will believe it outside of Paraguay. It can do me no harm ; and if your declarations should ever be published, they will only prove to the world what an infamous wretch Lopez is, for everybody will know that any declarations of that kind must have been extorted by torture or the fear of torture. Bliss and Masterman were convinced that they would be arrested as soon as they stepped beyond the precincts of the Legation. We conversed as to the order in which we should leave. At one time it was suggested that they should remain in the house, and claim that they were still in the Legation if Lopez's soldiers should enter to take them. This, however, was thought to be not the most prudent course to take, but that they should accompany me as far as they were permitted to, and never leave me unless taken by force. The French and Italian Consuls had come to accompany me from the house to the steamer, and Bliss and Masterman bade us all good by. They had, indeed, little hope that they would ever meet any of us again. Possibly, if I got away, something



would come to their relief ere they had been put out of the world.

That Mrs. Washburn might not be a witness of the scene that would probably take place at their arrest, she left the house with the child, in company with my private secretary and a woman-servant. As soon as they had turned the corner of the street we all started to follow. As we approached the door the crowd of soldiers moved up towards the house, and we stopped a moment and had a few words together, and walked along under the corridor of the house about half the way to the corner, when Masterman, with a foolishness and stupidity almost incredible, came very near committing a fatal blunder. He proposed to surrender himself to the police then and there, saying that if they were determined to take them they might as well do it there as to go out to the corner of the house. I instantly checked him and prevented him from taking so fatal a step, and told him and Bliss to follow me into the street, not to give themselves up, but to compel the police to take them by force. They accordingly followed on, keeping close in my rear. As I stepped off the piazza into the street the police hustled them away in another direction, and they all crowded around, separating me from them. I then, with the Consuls, stepped a little farther on, when I stopped and saw Masterman waving me an adieu and saying, "Don't forget us." I had just time to reply, "I will do the best I can for you," when he was pushed rudely along. Bliss was not even given time to make a parting salute, but was pushed along so roughly that he could not get a sight of me through the crowd of soldiers that was between him and me.

They were gone, taken from me by force, and within three feet of my own house. Could I yet save them? There was but one way. A quixotic attempt to rescue them by my single arm might involve me in their destruction, but could not help them. They had begged me to do nothing to still further enrage Lopez until I was beyond his power. I therefore moved on towards the river in company with the Consuls, and with my family, that were anxiously waiting for me on the



bank, went on board the steamer. The Consuls then left us and returned to town. At this time they were in great anxiety in regard to themselves. The Frenchman was particularly anxious, as he told me before we left the house that his Chancellor had been already accused, and would be very likely arrested, and that as for himself it was very probable he would have fetters upon his ankles before night.

We were now aboard the steamer, and I impatiently awaited the moment when she should cast off; but every moment seemed an hour. I still had great apprehensions that I should be detained, and I believed that Masterman's baggage would be the pretext for so doing. In the mean while a number of peons came from the arsenal to the boat, bringing on board some heavy boxes containing the money of the Englishmen which had been withdrawn some days before from my Legation. With them came Mr. Hunter, an Englishman, and the head man of the arsenal. I had not seen him to speak with him since some weeks before, when I had met him in the street and he had told me that he was afraid to speak to me. On this occasion he came on board, and the only sentence he said to me in English was to request me to talk to him in Spanish. I had hoped to learn from him something of the fate of his countrymen who had been at my house and had left it some two months before, but I saw the danger he was in, and that it would not do for him to say anything to me which the spies of Lopez could not understand and report. Therefore I only talked with him in Spanish, and of the most commonplace matters, but could learn nothing of the condition of others for whose welfare I felt the keenest anxiety. But when this money had come on board it was clear that we should finally get off; and yet never was order so welcome to my ears as that which was given to the engineer of the boat, about an hour after, to get under way. It was about two o'clock when we started, and I was expecting to find the Wasp lying near Lambaré, and I watched, as the boat rounded the point, with straining eyes, to catch a glimpse of the star-spangled banner. But we passed Lambaré, and went on and



on, and no sight of the Wasp, and then again I began to suspect that there was treachery, and that we were all to be taken to head-quarters to be subjected to I knew not what. In about two hours or a little more after leaving Asuncion we came in sight of Villeta, and there lay the Wasp in front, with her flag flaunting in the breeze. I now realized that our dangers were passed ; and yet it was not till we had come to anchor, and I saw my wife and child in the gig of the Wasp, and took my seat beside them, that I could believe that Lopez had consented to forego the pleasure of seeing me brought before his "solemn tribunal."



## CHAPTER XXX.

The Officers of the Wasp. — Interview between Kirkland and Lopez. — Lopez threatens to detain the American Minister. — Kirkland warns him of the Consequences. — Lopez frightened. — The Correspondence detained by Caxias. — Discourtesy and Dishonesty of Caxias. — Parting Visit of Kirkland to Lopez. — Messages to Lopez. — Letters from Mr. Bliss and Mr. Masterman. — A Parthian Arrow. — Masterman; Account of his Arrest, Torture, and Imprisonment. — Lopez's Protestations to Commander Kirkland. — Condition of Carreras, Fianza, and other Prisoners.

ON reaching the Wasp I immediately informed her commander of the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, and gave him a hurried account of recent events in Paraguay, telling him that he had arrived barely in time to rescue me and my family from the grasp of a monster who had resolved on our destruction, and that his last act towards me in seizing two members of my Legation had been a gross violation of my rights as a Minister of the United States, and an insult to the American flag. Commander Kirkland was not wholly unprepared for such a report, as, having been stationed for several years on the South Atlantic station, he had been frequently in Paraguay, and knew something of the government and of the despotic character of Lopez. Besides, there were many startling rumors in circulation at the mouth of the river at the time he left there, which led him to apprehend that he had a very delicate and difficult task to perform. He had been confirmed in this on reaching Paraguay, as appears from his first letters to me, in which he complained of the great discourtesy with which he had been treated, and said he could not learn either where I was or where Lopez was. The most of the officers of the Wasp, however, I found to be of the opinion, held almost universally throughout the United States and Europe, that Lopez was a hero, fighting bravely in



defence of his country and republican principles against monarchy, despotism, and slavery. They had, as was natural, an intense contempt of the Brazilians for allowing themselves to be held in check so long by a power so inferior in resources to themselves, and the sight of the huge squadron they had passed in the river lying idle for years, or bombarding at long range, apparently afraid to move against fortifications that would not delay an American monitor for a single day, was indeed well calculated to excite the contempt and disgust of veterans who had fought at Mobile and Fort Fisher. They were therefore unwilling to credit my statements in regard to the character and conduct of Lopez, or to admit that all their sympathies had been with a wretch so vile, cowardly, and cruel that all history could not show his parallel. Commander Kirkland, however, with whom I had been for a long time quite intimately acquainted, seemed to concur with me in everything, and gave me a minute account of all that had occurred between him and Lopez since he had first notified the latter of his presence in the vicinity. He told me that he had been greatly annoyed and delayed by Lopez's conduct towards him, until at last he was invited to an interview at his head-quarters. He had gone there with extreme distrust, feeling that Lopez was none too good to arrest him and treat him as he had many others, and had carried a loaded pistol in his pocket, prepared at the least sign of harm towards himself to shoot the tyrant dead on the spot. In the interview Lopez received him with his usual affability, and entered into conversation in regard to the object of his visit. Kirkland replied that he had been sent to take away the American Minister and his family. Lopez then said that his relations with Mr. Washburn were very bad ; that a great conspiracy had been discovered, and Mr. Washburn had been engaged in it ; that the conspiracy included a plan by which a revolution was to take place in Paraguay at the same time that the Brazilians, under the Marquês de Caxias, should make a grand demonstration at different points ; and that the plan of the conspiracy had been arranged by Caxias and the American Minister.



Kirkland said that he laughed in his face when he told him this, and replied that Caxias was too unfriendly to me to have any arrangement with me ; that he was very badly disposed towards me, and had done everything that he dared to prevent the Wasp from coming to my relief ; that whatever the American Minister might have had to do with other parties, he could not have had any relations with the Marques de Caxias, as he was his bitter enemy. Lopez replied to this, that he had no doubt of the fact ; that he had hundreds of witnesses to that effect. Kirkland replied that whether he had or not he did not know and did not care. It was not his business to inquire into any such matter ; he was not a diplomate, and it was not for him to enter into diplomatic questions. He had been sent there to take away the American Minister, whose official acts were of no concern to him as a naval officer. His own duties were the same. Lopez replied that under the circumstances he should not permit the American Minister to leave. He might perhaps allow him to take away the Minister's wife and child, but as for Mr. Washburn he must remain in the country. Kirkland promptly answered that he would not take away Mrs. Washburn and the child unless he took Mr. Washburn ; he had been sent to take away the American Minister, and unless he took him he would take nobody. At this stage of the conversation, Kirkland, according to the version of the interview that he gave me when I first went on board the Wasp, and many times afterwards, saw that it was time to appeal to the only motive that could influence Lopez, — fear. Assuming therefore an air of indifference, and smiling as if talking of a trifling matter, he said to Lopez he had better not commit any act of violence against Mr. Washburn. He then proceeded to magnify the influence and importance of the man whose liberty and life were the subject of discussion, saying some things of so extravagant a nature that I forbear quoting them. In substance they were to the effect that the American Minister still in the power of Lopez had such connections and political influence at home, that, were he to receive any harm, the whole military and



naval power of the great Republic would be despatched instantly to Paraguay to punish the outrage and avenge the insult. The government and people of the United States were not expecting any such action on the part of Paraguay. On the contrary, they had been greatly provoked by the conduct of the Brazilians in preventing the Wasp from passing the blockade several months before, and were even then preparing to take such measures against the enemies of Paraguay as would greatly inure to its advantage. The United States were greatly outraged by the refusal of the Marques de Caxias to permit the Wasp to pass the blockade in the preceding May, and had sent a squadron of six monitors, which was already on the coast of Brazil, with instructions, if the allies did not recede from their pretensions and make ample apology for the wrongs they had done in detaining the Wasp previously, to make war upon them. "And," said Kirkland, to quote his own words to me, "I told him that when these monitors reach Rio, if they shall find that Minister Washburn has been maltreated by you, they will not make war against Brazil, but will ascend the river Paraguay, which they can easily do, as they draw only seven feet of water ; and the first you will know, you will find that Asuncion is knocked about your ears ; and I advise you not to touch that man, for if you do the United States will hunt you all through Europe ; they will have your head sure." Kirkland said that while talking to Lopez in this way he could read his thoughts, and see that he felt as though he wanted to order him out to be shot ; that he could see the workings of his mind, and the smothered wrath that was raging within, and which he could hardly repress. He said that throughout the conversation he could see his object, and could tell when he was talking for effect and when he was telling the truth ; and he said that, of all the men with whom he had ever come in contact, he was the most transparent fool. At the threats of what the United States would do in case he carried out his intentions towards me, Kirkland said he could see that rage and anger were struggling against the fears of the cowardly tyrant ; and though he assumed a laughing, banter-



ing style in talking to him, he kept his eye fixed upon him, determined, if his passion got the better of his cowardice, and he showed any signs of treachery by ordering him to be arrested, to get the start of him by shooting him on the instant.

After this conversation, as Kirkland told me, Lopez drew a long breath, reflected awhile, and said he should let me go; and on comparing dates afterwards I found that it was not till after that conversation with Kirkland that I received the letter from Caminos, in which, after recapitulating at such enormous length my offences and crimes, he concluded with the notice that my passports would be sent to me.

Commander Kirkland had brought with him a large number of official and other letters addressed to me, and an immense number of newspapers, in fact all the correspondence and all the newspapers that had accumulated at different places between the mouth of the river and the military lines during the last ten months. Among these were a box and a package that the same officer had left with the Marques de Caxias on the 10th of June preceding, with a request that he would send them through the lines together with the letter that he intrusted to him, to advise me that, as he was not permitted to pass the blockade, he was about to return to Montevideo.

I now learned that Caxias, taking advantage of my inability to make complaints to my government, had committed an act of great discourtesy and palpable dishonesty in detaining those packages. The letter from Commander Kirkland, stating that he had left them to be forwarded, did not reach me for two weeks, and when it did come I was informed by Colonel Fernandez, and I have no doubt correctly, that it had not been sent by an officer with a flag of truce to the advanced lines, but advantage had been taken of the errand to send a monitor under flag of truce above Humaita to Timbo to deliver the letter, and at the same time take observations of the Paraguayan defences. Caxias had promised to send the packages at the first opportunity. Yet though he sent a gunboat to carry the letter from Kirkland, he showed that he cherished his old vindictiveness towards me by detaining my



correspondence, and keeping it in his possession till after I had left Paraguay and it had become nearly valueless. Thus while Lopez was trying to fasten upon me the charge of being engaged in a conspiracy with Caxias, holding frequent correspondence with him for more than a year, and planning the details of a revolution, the latter would have it that I was the friend and champion of the Paraguayan tyrant, and that he was absolved from observing the ordinary rules of courtesy and of common honesty towards me.

Among the despatches brought me by Commander Kirkland was my letter of recall, for which I had so often asked my government. There were also several letters from our Minister in Rio, General Webb. In these letters he complained of the vacillating and tortuous course of the Brazilians, the shameful corruption that was existing in the army, and the weakness and duplicity of that government; and as he supposed at the time that some of them were written that I was still in good relations with Lopez, he assured me that if he could hold out for a limited period he would finally triumph; that the Brazilians would not much longer maintain so expensive, exhausting, and useless a war. As Commander Kirkland advised me after I had got aboard the *Wasp* that he should again visit Lopez to take a final leave of his Excellency, I requested him, with an object more malicious than diplomatic, to take my letter of recall and one of General Webb's letters and read them to Lopez. This object was to show him how transparent were all the falsehoods which he had put into the declarations of Berges and others of his victims in regard to me, and likewise to make it manifest to him that in all I had done I had been supported by my government, and that, having been recalled at my own request, made many months before, it would be clear to all the world that I could not possibly have had any such designs as had been imputed to me in the declarations which he had extorted by torture from his victims or else had forged himself. I also gave to Kirkland a memorandum of things which I desired him to say to Lopez: among others, that there never had been any conspiracy to the best



of my knowledge and belief; and that I knew none of the parties who had been in my house, and who were then, as I supposed, in his power, had ever taken any part in anything of the kind, even supposing that there had been a plot of a treasonable character undertaken by others. I also requested him to protest against the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, and say that I regarded them as members of my Legation, and that their seizure in the street from my side was as much a violation of my rights as a Minister, and of the American flag, as though he had entered my house and taken them by force; that I should thus represent their seizure to my government, which I had no doubt would take the same view of it and demand their release, holding him responsible if any evil should befall them.

Kirkland left the Wasp on the morning of the 11th September to make his visit of ceremony. At the time he left he regarded Lopez as a wretch capable of any fraud or treachery, fully believing that he was going into great personal danger, and the last thing he did before going over the side of the vessel was to place in the side-pocket of his coat a small revolver; large enough, however, to do efficient work at close quarters. When he came back in the evening and related to me the incidents of the day, I was greatly surprised and disappointed at being told that he had forgotten to take my memorandum with him. Having read it over hastily, before going on shore, he had endeavored to recollect its contents and to comply with my request by telling Lopez all that I had desired him to say. He delivered the letter of recall, and translated the letter of General Webb. The main point, however, my protest against the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, he did not allude to, or at least not in such terms as I had desired him to use. From the general tenor of the conversation which he had, both with Lopez and Madam Lynch, I inferred that his reception had been much more gracious and cordial than on the preceding occasion, and that they had concluded it would be for their interest to make a friend of him before his departure. I was confirmed in this by the fact that the next morning some supplies of fresh



beef and a quantity of sugar-cane were sent to the Wasp, besides which there were several large tercios of yerba maté.

Previously to his going on shore the last time, Kirkland received a note from Dr. Carreras, requesting that if he had brought any letters for him he would deliver them to the bearer. Being familiar with the handwriting of Carreras, I knew the signature to be his, and as there were several letters for him in my packages I requested Kirkland to deliver them in accordance with this request. I knew, indeed, that this note had been written under compulsion; but as I was convinced there could be nothing in the letters that could implicate or compromise Carreras in any manner, but that they must rather vindicate him, I could see no objection to their falling into the hands of Lopez, though that Carreras would ever see them I had little expectation. Kirkland, however, declined to deliver them, unless I would first open them and ascertain whether they contained anything of a treasonable nature or not; for, after the accusations which had been brought against me, he said he was determined to deliver nothing of which he did not know the contents, lest he too might be accused of aiding conspirators in transmitting their correspondence.

As nothing favorable to Bliss and Masterman had resulted from Kirkland's last interview with Lopez, it was incumbent upon me to send a written protest directly to him, and I accordingly wrote a note to that effect early the next morning; Kirkland, having expressed his intention to weigh anchor and start at an early hour, left no opportunity for discussion. While I was writing this letter an officer came aboard, bringing a letter from Mr. Bliss to me, another to Captain Kirkland, and a third to Henry Bliss, Esq., of New York. I opened Bliss's letter, and found it to be the following very extraordinary document, in Spanish:—

“ September 11, 1868.

“ *To his Excellency Hon. Charles A. Washburn, United States Minister Resident.*

“ SIR, — Finding myself at length relieved from the restraint which your Excellency has so long exercised over my will, I cannot do



less than confess freely and spontaneously the important part which your Excellency has taken in the revolution, in which you have involved many persons, and among them myself. I have declared (regretting deeply, because I would like to avoid such a scandal to your Excellency, but following out the truth) that you have been the soul of the revolution ; and if this deed now appears to the light of Heaven, confessed to by all its accomplices, to whom does it owe its existence save to your Excellency, who has continued its direction up to a very recent period ? I consider myself, therefore, completely absolved from the promise which you extorted from me yesterday in your office, not to reveal your proceedings old or new. Even your brilliant speculations with the company of Hopkins, for which you were to pocket a hundred and odd thousands of patacones, have been put in evidence, as also the gilded pill Polidoro and Octaviano made you swallow, besides the last one administered by Caxias, at the time of your Excellency's celebrated visit of mediation in March, last year.

“The object of this letter is to say to you that I have determined to request from your Excellency the delivery to the bearer of my historical manuscripts, which involve a compromise with this government, and which are without reason in deposit with Your Excellency, you having taken possession of them during my illness last year, and I having forgotten to demand them of you. They consist, as your Excellency well knows, of a voluminous history of Paraguay till the year 1810, and some two thousand pages or more of notes in Spanish on more recent epochs, with the chronology up to our days.

“Also, I beg that you will have the goodness to send me the three letters written by your express order for your justification regarding the affairs of the revolution, of which one is addressed to the New York World, another to Rev. William T. Goodfellow in Buenos Aires, and the last to my father, Henry Bliss, Esq., of New York.

“The truth having been fully displayed, these letters cannot serve you for any object, and since they are false it suits me no longer to keep the mystery of hypocrisy, and for your own honor you ought to comply strictly with these my demands.

“I do not exact from you the English manuscripts which you made me write in a spirit inimical to Paraguay, since these are your property. But I advise you as a friend not to attempt to fight against the evidence given by infinite witnesses.



"I take advantage of the occasion to salute your Excellency with distinguished esteem and appreciation.

"PORTER C. BLISS."

Commander Kirkland's letter contained a request from Mr. Bliss that he would delay the departure of the Wasp a sufficient time for me to deliver to the Paraguayan authorities the documents, letters, etc., alluded to, and enclosed a duplicate of his letter to me. The letter which Bliss had sent to me addressed "Henry Bliss, Esq., New York," I saw at a glance was for a mythical person. It explained the whole story of the circumstances under which it had been written, though for my part I needed no explanation. The letter was in these words : —

"PARAGUAY, September 11, 1868.

"HENRY BLISS, ESQ.

"DEAR FATHER, — I feel myself under an obligation to inform you that the letter which you will receive through Mr. Washburn, dated the 5th instant, is utterly unreliable in all its details, for the reason that it was written at the command of Mr. Washburn, and for the only object of clearing him from the true charges made against him by the conspirators, who have given in their truthful testimony before the tribunals. Mr. Washburn demanded of me that letter, in order to publish it in self-justification, when the fact of the case is that Mr. Washburn has not only been the head of a revolution here, but has by his influence and commands, taking advantage of his official position, involved me in a co-operation to some extent in his plans, for which I am truly sorry, and deposit all my hopes of pardon in the magnanimity of Marshal Lopez. I have written from the same point of view two other letters, one to the New York World, and another to William T. Goodfellow, of Buenos Aires, both of which are to be considered in the same light as that to you, and I do not write to rectify them solely from lack of time. I hope you will not be deceived into accepting as facts the statements in the letter referred to, but will believe that the conduct of Mr. Washburn has been in this matter worthy the highest execration, and I hope that you will give publicity to the present rectification.

"Your affectionate son,

"PORTER C. BLISS."



As I knew that Henry Bliss was not the name of the father of the writer of this letter, but that his father was the Rev. Asher Bliss, of Cattaraugus County, New York, it was clear that Bliss had resorted to this subterfuge at the last moment in order to show, not only to me, but to others, that he was writing under duress.

Masterman, I may remark, wrote the following letter to me, which for some reason I never received. I found it published afterwards, however, by the Paraguayan government : —

“ September 12, 1868.

“ MY DEAR MOTHER, — In my letter to you of the 8th instant, sent through Mr. Washburn, I mentioned the terrible conspiracy to destroy the government of Paraguay and its President, who by his skill and bravery in this war has defied the power of Brazil and gained a reputation unexampled. The conspiracy was suggested and cheerfully arranged by Mr. Washburn, who was in league with the enemy. As I was living in his house, I could not help hearing about it ; and I am sorry I did not denounce him to the government, but I have done all I could to make up for the neglect. I have candidly confessed all I know of this terrible business, and I hope I shall be pardoned by the President. I hope my life may be spared so I may see you again.

“ Your affectionate son,

“ GEORGE.”

Kirkland, upon reading the letter from Bliss, said to me : “ This man must be a fool. Does he think I am going to stop the steamer here for him ; that I will delay for his accommodation ? ” I instantly told him that both these letters from Bliss had been written at the dictation of Lopez, and undoubtedly their author had been most cruelly tortured in order to compel him to write them ; that he should pay no attention to his letter, as I knew that Bliss neither expected nor desired it.

I hastily finished my letter to Lopez, and as soon as possible had it copied. I give it here entire : —



"United States Steamer Wasp, off Angostura, River Paraguay,  
September 12, 1868.

"*To his Excellency Marshal Lopez, President of Paraguay.*

"SIR, — When Captain Kirkland was about leaving this vessel yesterday to bid farewell to your Excellency, I gave him a memorandum of certain things to which I requested him to call your attention. Captain Kirkland informs me that on reaching your head-quarters he found he had omitted to take this memorandum with him, and therefore was unable to comply fully with my request, having only given the paper a hasty perusal. I therefore take the liberty, at the moment of my departure, of deviating from diplomatic customs, and sending a personal note directed to your Excellency. In this memorandum I suggested that he might show you a letter from General Webb, our Minister in Rio, from which it would appear that he had almost come to a rupture with that government, by reason of its refusal to permit this vessel to pass above the squadron. This he had done on his own responsibility, without waiting for orders from the United States government, which, on hearing of the outrage, has doubtless taken the most energetic measures to enforce its rights and extricate its Minister from a most frightful position. This letter, which you saw, proves how much truth there was in the declaration of your ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs, José Berges, that I was in collusion with General Webb, and in the interest and pay of the Brazilians.

"I have in my possession several letters for Dr. Carreras, which I yesterday requested Captain Kirkland to deliver, but which he refused to do unless I would open them, lest he too should be accused of conveying treasonable correspondence. I herewith send the letters, however, as I do not believe that any treasonable correspondence has ever passed through my hands for or to anybody. In fact I do not believe there has ever been any conspiracy.

"The declarations of Berges, your two brothers Venancio and Benigno, and Sr. Urdapilleta, as given in the notes of your last two Ministers of Foreign Relations, in so far as they implicate me of having any knowledge of a conspiracy, are entirely false, and you know it ; and you know that not one of them would confirm or affirm the declaration imputed to him if he were out of your power, but would deny it *in toto*, and declare that he had never made it, or that he had done so under torture. Declarations of that kind, your



Excellency ought to know, will have no weight outside of Paraguay. Not one word of them will be believed; and that all may not be denied by them, you must not only kill all the persons who have made them, but all by whom they were extorted.

"Before finally leaving Paraguay it is my duty to make my solemn protest against the arrest of those two members of my Legation, Porter Cornelius Bliss and George F. Masterman. Their arrest in the street, as they were going with me from the Legation to pass on board the steamer, was as gross a violation of the laws of nations as would have been their seizure by force in my house. It was an act not only against my government, but against all civilized powers, and places Paraguay outside the pale of the family of nations; and for this act you will be regarded as a common enemy, one denying allegiance to the laws of nations.

"You will also be regarded as a common enemy for having seized and made prisoners and loaded with fetters nearly all the foreigners in Paraguay, and afterwards entered their houses and taken away their money on the miserable pretext, that, finding less in your treasury than you expected, those who had any money in the country must therefore have robbed it from the government.

"Your threat to Captain Kirkland, on his first arrival, that you would keep me a prisoner in the country, will be duly represented to my government; and I only wish to confirm his reply to you, that had you done so my government would have hunted you, not only through all South America, but throughout Europe.

"Your obedient servant,

"CHARLES A. WASHBURN."

I enclosed this with a brief note to Bliss, which I did not suppose he would ever be permitted to see, stating that I had nothing in my possession belonging to him, and therefore should send nothing, and requesting him to deliver the accompanying letter to President Lopez with his own hand.

As I was writing that note I had little doubt that, if Lopez should receive and read it before the Wasp was below his batteries, in his rage and fury he would fire upon her. But I was then under the American flag and in a national gunboat, and I knew that if he sunk the vessel and destroyed us all we



should not die unavenged. He could not then fabricate a version of the affair that could justify him or avert from him a terrible retribution. He had not the power to destroy all the witnesses and blot out the entire record as he had while I was yet in Asuncion. I said nothing to Commander Kirkland, however, in regard to the danger which such a letter would provoke if received by Lopez while we were yet under his guns. But before we were ready to start, or my letter had been delivered, we were informed that a small steamer with a flag of truce would accompany us below the Paraguayan fortifications and to within sight of the Brazilian squadron. The letter accordingly was not delivered until we had passed all the Paraguayan batteries, and the flag-of-truce boat had turned up the river, where it was detained for a moment, and a boat from the Wasp put off to deliver this Parthian arrow. In this opinion, that Lopez would have fired on the Wasp had he received that letter in time to have done so, I was confirmed by the first letters which I received, both from Dr. Stewart and Colonel Thompson, after they had escaped from the power of Lopez. Colonel Thompson wrote me very soon after he was taken prisoner, that, had Lopez received that letter while the Wasp was yet above his lower batteries, he himself, being in command of them, would have had orders to sink the vessel. Dr. Stewart, who was near Lopez at the time, also, in the very first letter which he wrote me after escaping from Paraguay, alluded to the narrow escape of the Wasp, and said that, had my letter been received in time, all the Paraguayan guns that could have been brought to bear against her in her descent of the river would have opened upon her.

Bliss and Masterman have both in published statements given their experience of those times, and I will give the following extract from Mr. Masterman's book of his experience during the first days after they fell into the hands of Lopez; and as in all its parts it agrees with the statements of Mr. Bliss, and is otherwise corroborated, I believe it is literally correct.

The manner in which they were taken from me when I left



the Legation has been already described. Their subsequent treatment I give in Masterman's own words:—

"We—that is, Mr. Bliss, the negro Baltazar, and myself—were surrounded by about thirty policemen, who with shouts and yells ordered us to march down to the Policia. . . . When we reached the office we were halted in the road, and kept standing there about an hour; then the negro was taken within, after some time Mr. Bliss, and lastly myself. I found the Chief of Police seated in the corridor, with a group of his savage myrmidons around him; he looked at me in silence for some minutes, and then by a gesture ordered me to be stripped. My clothes were most strictly and systematically examined, the lining torn out, and every fold ripped up. My little packets of quinine were of course discovered, pounced upon with a shout of triumph by the men, and put carefully on one side. My handkerchief, cravat, and money were taken from me, the rest returned. I was then told to sit down, that fetters might be riveted on my ankles, and afterwards taken through a side court and thrust into a cell. . . . About seven o'clock in the evening the door opened; a sergeant and two men entered with a lantern; one carried a hammer and a small anvil, the other a set of irons. . . . The fetters I was wearing were removed, and the massive bar the man bore on his shoulder was riveted in their place. Two rough iron loops, with eyes at their extremities, were first placed over my ankles; then the bar, which was about eighteen inches in length and two in diameter, was thrust through the eyes; and an iron wedge, with many a blow of the heavy hammer, riveted firmly at one end, whilst a broad knob secured it at the other. Thus fettered, it was with the greatest difficulty that I staggered to my feet, and then sat down again, scarcely able to bear the weight. I had previously heard them riveting similar irons on my companions. A short time afterwards the sergeant reappeared, and motioned me in silence to follow him. I did so. He led me to the front of the Policia, where, by the light of some lanterns, I saw Mr. Bliss and Baltazar mounted sideways on mules, and waiting for me.

I was lifted into the saddle, for the thirty or more pounds' weight of my fetters prevented me even raising a foot from the ground. . . . I soon found to my dismay that Villeta was our destination, a distance of thirty-five miles. . . . I begged the sergeant to let us travel as slowly as possible; for at every step the heavy bar swung back-



wards and forwards, and a jolt was agonizing. He did so ; but once, in descending a steep slope, the mules broke into a trot. In trying to steady the bar, I lost my balance, and fell to the ground. I was tied to the girths, and, unable to extricate myself, was dragged for some distance head downwards, the mule kicking viciously the while. Fortunately the only damage was a deep cut in the ankle and a few bruises."

Of that night's journey, Mr. Bliss\* testified as follows before the Congressional Committee of Investigation :—

"The sufferings of that night to all of us were such as I never endured in an equal period before or since, though I was subsequently put to the torture on various occasions ; but the tortures to which we were subjected were tolerable, when compared with the agony we suffered on that fearful night. . . . The weight of the fetters on my ankles had become excruciating torture, until I nearly fainted, but nevertheless was obliged to maintain my position, still without food or relief, until noon of the next day. . . . I fell off several times, and was dragged a considerable distance by the horse I rode."

On arriving near Villeta they were helped to dismount, when they fell exhausted, and more dead than alive, to the ground. Masterman's narrative continues :—

"An *alferez* harshly told me to stand up ; I tried, but the weight of my irons threw me on my face. He drew his sword and struck me heavily with the flat of it, and a corporal came up and thrashed me with his stick, until, by a violent effort, I staggered to my feet. A few paces off was a square space enclosed with hide ropes ; I was told to go within it ; and then, too fatigued to notice the poor wretches, my fellow-prisoners, I threw myself on the bare ground, and fell almost immediately into a deep sleep. Late in the afternoon I was awakened by a blow with a stick, and told to rise and march towards a little grove of orange-trees, about half a mile off. Aching in every limb, I obeyed, and, supporting my fetters with a strip of hide, moved with pain and difficulty in the direction indicated as fast as my bruised and bleeding feet would carry me. A *cabo*, or corporal, followed, armed with a bayonet and a stick. 'Go faster!' he shouted every moment ; I tried, but in vain, to do so.

\* Paraguayan Investigation, p. 138.



He thrashed me savagely with his stick over my shoulders and arms, knocked me down twice, and beat me more cruelly for falling. At last, bruised and breathless, I reached a group of little huts, made of branches and reeds, and placed in two rows. I saw Mr. Bliss and Baltazar taken separately on one side; I went to the other, and entered the farthest hut. Within it was seated an old captain, named Falcón, and a priest, who, as I afterwards found, acted as secretary.

"The former signed me to enter, and after scrutinizing me for a few minutes, said, 'Ah! we have got you at last. Now confess that Washburn is the chief of the conspirators, and that you took refuge in the Legation for the purpose of plotting against the government.' I replied, calmly, that I had no confession to make; that I had never plotted against the government, but had done all in my power to serve the Paraguayans; that I was sure that Mr. Washburn was quite innocent of the crimes alleged against him; and I explained in a few words under what circumstances I had entered his service. He heard me with many marks of impatience, to the end, and then said, 'You will not confess?' 'I have no confession to make.' 'Confess,' he repeated, 'or I will see if we cannot make you.' Then turning to the priest, he told him to take me out and put me in the rack (*potro*). He took me behind the hut, but close to it, so that Falcón within could hear all that passed. I prayed silently for strength to bear this trial, and then looked round for the implements of torture, but found that these savages, like those in 'The Last of the Mohicans,' ought to have expressed regret that their means of inflicting pain were so primitive. At this call the corporal and two soldiers came forward, carrying a bundle of muskets and strips of hide. I was told to seat myself on the ground, with my knees raised; I did so, and was again asked, 'Will you confess?' 'No, I am innocent.'

"One of the men tied my arms tightly behind me, the other passed a musket under my knees, and then putting his foot between my shoulders forced my head down until my throat rested on the lower musket; a second was put over the back of my neck, and they were firmly lashed together. They left me so for some time, striking the butt-ends of the fire-locks occasionally with a mallet; the priest meanwhile, in a monotonous voice, as if he were repeating a formula he had often gone through, urged me to confess, and 'receive the mercy of the kind and generous Marshal Lopez.' I made



no reply, but suffered the intense pain they were inflicting in silence. At length they unbound me, and I was asked once more, 'Will you confess?' I replied in the negative. They bound me up as before, but with two muskets at the back of my neck. As they were tightening the cords, I threw my head forward to avoid the pressure on my throat, and my lips were badly cut and bruised against the lower musket; the blood almost choked me, and I fainted from the excruciating pain.

"When I recovered I was lying on the grass utterly exhausted, and felt that I could bear no more; that it would be far preferable to make a pretended confession, and be shot, than suffer such cruel torture. So, as they were about to again apply the *uruguayana*, as it is called by them, I said, 'I am guilty; I will confess'; and they immediately unbound me. The priest said, 'Why were you such an obstinate fool? Your companion Bliss was only threatened with the torture, and confessed at once.' . . . I heard poor Baltazar loudly praying for mercy several times, and now the sounds of heavy blows, each followed by a shriek from him, proved how much more they were prepared to inflict upon us; they were smashing his fingers with a mallet; I pitied him very much, for he knew nothing whatever about the pretended plot, nor the charges against his master, and could not save himself, even by protesting that he was guilty.

"I drank some water and tried to eat a little meat they offered me, but could not, and then, returning within the hut, I told as well as I could remember it, the same miserable story that had been wrested from Carreras, Berges, Benigno Lopez, and the rest whose depositions I had read with Mr. Washburn. There was no help for it, but God knows with what agony and shame I repeated that wretched tissue of fables and misrepresentations. I felt that I ought rather to have suffered any martyrdom than purchase life on such terms, and until I was put to the torture I hoped and believed I should have done so; it was that, however, and not death, I feared. It must be remembered that for three months I had suffered great anxiety, daily expecting to be arrested; that I had heard how mercilessly those who refused to confess had been mangled before execution; that I had had a long and painful journey; and that I had been almost without food for two days. On the other hand, I could do but little wrong to the accused. Mr. Washburn was safe on board



the Wasp; Rodriguez, Gomez (late the Mayor-de-Plaza), Bedoya, Barrios, and Gonzales had already been shot or died; and as to the others, I could only repeat what I had heard of their own depositions. . .

"During my examination several officers came in. . . . From the conversation of these men I gathered several valuable hints as to the course I had best adopt, and especially that the more I abused Mr. Washburn the better. I also ascertained incidentally that he was then on board the Wasp, and that I could not therefore endanger his safety by anything I should say against him.

"Late at night a priest named Roman came in; he looked at me, with a malicious smile playing round his mouth for some time, and then asked for my deposition. Falcón, who was evidently in great awe of him, handed over the papers. He read them through, was about to tear them in pieces, but restrained himself and threw them contemptuously on the table, saying, '*Que miserables disparátes!*' ('What wretched trash!') Then turning to me, 'Are these your revelations? Now, look you. I go for a short ride, and if on my return I do not find that you have confessed clearly that the great beast (*gran bestia*), Washburn, is the chief conspirator, that he was in treaty with Caxias, and that he received money and letters from the enemy, *and that you knew it*, I will put you in the *uruguayana*, and keep you there till you do. . . .

"The clanking of my irons as I move uneasily on my hard seat calls the attention of the 'fiscal' to the business in hand. 'Come, Masterman,' he says, not unkindly, 'let us have the whole of the story; tell us how the great beast intended to destroy us all.' He puts on his spectacles again and writes down my words in a condensed form on a spare piece of paper, for he likes to amplify them himself without any particular attention to what I did say; but I am too tired to object and protest as I did at first, and am not sure but that it is better to let him do as he likes. 'The criminal, having confessed freely and voluntarily his guilt,' he begins to dictate to his secretary, the awkward subject of torture being kept in the shade, 'and having been solemnly admonished by the Señores Fiscales to tell the whole of the truth now, in order to relieve his burdened conscience, deposes that Washburn was the originator and chief mover in the plot,' and so on through two sheets of closely written foolscap. I got on swimmingly for a time, but presently I



was asked how much money Washburn had paid me. 'Not a rial,' I answered, stoutly, and truly enough. . . . Thus I had had many disputes with Mr. Washburn on political and literary subjects. . . . I magnified these into quarrels, and put it to them as reasonable men if it were likely that a person who regarded me as an enemy, and who had retained me in his house because he needed my professional services, would place his life in my hands by confiding such a secret fully to my keeping.

"I went on to remind Falcón how much I owed to Mr. Washburn ; that he had obtained my release from prison, and had taken me for his medical attendant when the government had refused me a license to practise, and for that reason I had not denounced him to the police. For although I was a devoted friend of the Paraguayans (and there I spoke truthfully enough), I felt so grateful to him that I could not ruin him, a man who had befriended me. I took shame to myself, and repented greatly of my obstinacy in compelling my judges to put me to the torture, when I ought to have declared the truth months before ; but they must remember that I was distracted between obligations to the state and to him."

This treatment, which was bestowed with much impartiality on both Bliss and Masterman, was that which they received on the day following their arrest. It seems that they were brought to head-quarters and immediately tortured and examined, with the purpose of compelling them to disclose before the departure of the Wasp what they had written to their friends. Having admitted that they had sent letters by me, they were ordered to write others also to be taken by me, declaring that their first letters had been written under compulsion and at my dictation, whereas the letters they then wrote were free and spontaneous, and what, having escaped from my power and influence, a sense of duty induced them to write. Bliss's letter, as given before, he was compelled to write over five separate times before it met entirely the views of Lopez. More properly it was Lopez's letter, and Masterman's letter was written also while the fetters were on his ankles, with a soldier over him, and in such terms as suited the purpose of Lopez. They had little hesitation in regard to those letters, so far as they themselves were concerned, for



they knew that I should understand under what circumstances they had been written. We had all anticipated that something of the kind might be done ; and under that anticipation I had advised them, if necessary to save their lives, to admit anything whatever so far as I was concerned. According to the narratives of both, they were subjected simultaneously to the same treatment. When first questioned as to their knowledge of any conspiracy or plot, both of them declared that they were ignorant of anything of the kind, and the tortures were applied to make them confess. At first they asserted that they had nothing to confess, — that they knew nothing. They were told, however, that it was useless for them to deny anything ; that the government was already informed of everything ; and in order to induce them to yield, as they were both being examined at the same time at a considerable distance apart, each was told that the other had already confessed, and had admitted that he was a conspirator, and that the other was equally so. Masterman when told this was very indignant that his fellow-sufferer should so easily give in, and not only confess to what was false, but should inculcate him. Bliss, who still retained his self-possession, saw at once through the trick when told that Masterman had confessed, and did not give in till afterwards. The matter of priority, however, was of little consequence ; they were both compelled to yield at last ; and as they had no idea of what they were expected to admit or to avow a knowledge of, they could only judge from the questions that were put to them what answers were desired.

These two gentlemen, members of the American Legation, were subjected to the dreadful tortures which have been described on the very day subsequent to my departure from Asuncion, while the Wasp was yet lying in the river in front of Villeta, and at the very moment that Commander Kirkland was holding an interview with President Lopez, in which interview, while expressing great dissatisfaction with my course, the tyrant was professing the greatest regard and respect for the government and people of the United States, and declaring



his intention to do everything in his power to maintain friendly relations with them.

On entering the open space in which he was to be confined as a prisoner, after having undergone the torture described, and confessed to his complicity in the conspiracy, Masterman thus proceeds :—

“ Within a space on the gently sloping hillside which had been roughly cleared from brushwood, and about a hundred feet square, lay forty prisoners ; and on all sides, as far as I could see, were similar enclosures tenanted in the same way. The nearest was somewhat luxurious, for each prisoner had a little straw kennel to lie down in ; and there I saw Don Venancio, the President’s eldest brother, and Captain Fianza, an old friend of Mr. Washburn ; the rest were officers, some of high rank. I have said that Dr. Carreras lay next to me during the night ; I was removed some distance from him in the morning ; but he had time to whisper, ‘ Has Mr. Washburn gone ? ’ ‘ Yes. ’ He was about to ask other questions when a sentry noticed us and growled, ‘ Hold your tongue. ’ The doctor was a pitiable object, indeed so changed that I could scarcely believe that the wretched creature before me was really he. Emaciated, travel and blood stained, he was but a shadow of his former self. For two months he had been lying as I saw him, in the open air, with no shelter from the sun or rain but a blanket. He had rolled it up for a seat, and was furtively watching me and trying to form questions by the motion of his lips. . . . Taylor, the master mason and builder of the new palace, of whose arrest we had no knowledge while in the Legation, looked at me and raised his hands with a gesture of commiseration, but did not dare to give any other sign of recognition. In the centre of the prison encampment, or *guardia*, as the natives term it, was a row of priests, I think eight in number ; they were all in irons, and must have been recently brought in, for their long cloth cloaks were little worn ; then some prisoners of war, — there were a major and three captains among them, as I learnt when our names were called over ; they were not fettered, but were in the last stage of misery, almost, some quite, covered with wounds, and the majority too feeble to walk ; and lastly a group of felons, distinguished by a single iron ring on the right ankle. These looked scarcely human, were without a rag of clothing, and generally lay in a huddled heap on the ground. . . .



In our rear was the kitchen, that is, a large iron pot set over a fire in the open air ; there a stalwart negro, assisted by several prisoners, prepared the food for all the *guardias* around, and little enough it was, — a small allowance of boiled meat and broth in the morning, and at night a handful of parched maize and the bones and scraps left by the soldiers. I saw poor Dr. Carreras, once the most influential man in Uruguay, an ex-prime minister, eagerly gnawing the gristle from a few well-picked bones, contemptuously thrown him by a passer-by."

Such was the treatment accorded by the tyrant of Paraguay to the two members of the American Legation that he had forcibly taken from the protection of the Minister. The details of their treatment, of course, I did not know then, but the letter that I had received from Bliss after his seizure told the whole story of his torture. What could I then do for him or Masterman, was my first thought on reaching the Wasp. They would, of course, be treated with most inhuman cruelty ; but I knew that Lopez took too much delight in the infliction of pain to put them speedily to death, and besides I believed that fear would restrain him from such an act until he might learn whether or not my government would sustain me and demand them. My last letter to him, in which I still claimed them, though taken in the street, as members of my Legation, and denounced their seizure as the act of a common enemy of the human race, would appeal to his sense of fear ; and I hoped that ere they were executed an American squadron would come to their rescue. My first duty was to hasten to the mouth of the river to give the alarm, and advise the Admiral of the insult to the flag and the outrage on the Legation.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

Final Departure. — Corrientes. — Duties of Neutrals. — Excitement at Buenos Aires. — The *Semanario*. — Published Correspondence. — Letter to the English Minister. — Hostility of the Allies. — The Wasp sent to the Seat of War. — Refused a Passage through the Blockade. — Return to Montevideo. — General J. Watson Webb. — His Energetic Action. — He demands his Passports. — The Objections withdrawn. — The Wasp returns to Paraguay. — Her Arrival a Surprise to Lopez. — His Plans deranged. — Indignation of the Allies. — Gaucho Ideas of the Duties of a Neutral Minister. — The American Navy: the System and the Practices under it. — Despotic Powers of the Admiral. — Rear-Admiral Charles H. Davis. — His Fleet-Captain, Francis M. Ramsey. — Difference of Opinion between the Admiral and General Webb. — Insulting Letter from the Admiral. — He shows his Independence by delaying the Departure of the Squadron.

AT last we were beyond the tyrant's power. As we passed beyond the reach of the guns of his fortifications at Angostura, the sense of security to ourselves which we then experienced brought more vividly than ever to our minds the situation of those we had left behind. The misfortune that had befallen Bliss and Masterman was but a single item in the catalogue of disasters that had happened to hundreds of our friends, whom we should never meet again, and of whom we should never learn anything more than that they had been made to suffer the most horrible agonies that the combined cruelty and avarice of Lopez and Lynch could invent. Bliss and Masterman might escape, but of many others in whom we took a deeper interest than in them we were convinced we should never hear more than that they had miserably perished of torture and starvation or had been executed. I had lived for a long time in Paraguay, and the people, without exception, when acting of their own impulse, and not under the orders of Lopez, had always treated me with kindness, hospitality, and



respect. Among all the Paraguayans I believed I had not a single enemy except Lopez, and among all the foreigners none except Madam Lynch.

On our way down the river we stopped at Corrientes, where I advised every one I met that Lopez had arrested all the foreigners in Paraguay, and had killed or would kill them all unless the allies should show more activity and destroy him before he had time to carry his plan of indiscriminate murder into execution. I was hoping that this information might be known to Caxias and the whole allied army, and that it might stimulate them to move before the whole people were exterminated. Lopez had committed an act of war against the United States, and for it I had denounced him as a common enemy. I therefore considered myself at full liberty to publish to the world any information I might possess, and believed that I was not only acting within the limits of my official duty, but should do the world a service, if I contributed to bring to a speedier close his murderous career. I observed, however, that Commander Kirkland was extremely reluctant to have anything promulgated prejudicial to Lopez, giving as a reason that neutral gunboats passing the military lines had no right to convey intelligence from one belligerent to the other.

On arriving at Buenos Aires, the news brought with us caused the greatest excitement. I had scarcely reached my hotel before it was overrun with people who came anxiously to inquire for friends in Paraguay. I had but one answer for all: "Lopez has arrested your friends, and has either killed them all or holds them as prisoners loaded with fetters. Their wives and children, if not arrested, have been driven to the interior to die of starvation and exposure, rather than that they should escape to tell the story of his cruelties."

I had brought away with me a file of the *Semanario* containing the correspondence between Benitez and myself until Lopez, finding that my answers confounded his witnesses and showed them to contradict themselves and each other, discontinued the publication. I loaned this to an editor of one of the daily papers to be republished, reserving that which had



not already appeared in the *Semanario*, as it is a rule of the State Department that official correspondence shall not be published till so authorized by the Secretary. Commander Kirkland had brought another file of *Semanarios*, which had been furnished by Lopez, that the correspondence might be published in Buenos Aires. A copy of the long letter signed by Caminos, which had not appeared in the *Semanario*, was also given to Kirkland to be published with the rest. Lopez also ordered Dr. Stewart to write a letter to his brother, George D. Stewart, in Buenos Aires. This letter was never published, but was shown to me by the recipient, who, before I read it, said he hoped I would not feel any unkindness towards his brother for writing such a letter. I replied no, I certainly should not. It was Lopez's letter, not Dr. Stewart's; and though it might be in the handwriting of the latter, it had been dictated by Lopez. This letter pretended to give some details of the conspiracy which we had never heard of before. Among other things it said that it was a part of the plan to kill off the soldiers of the Republic by poisoning the wine in the public storehouses. As there was no wine in the country except that which was closely guarded for the use of Lopez and Madam Lynch, the absurdity of the story would defeat the object of the letter among those who knew anything of Paraguay. But the purpose of Lopez in having the letter written was to have it published and circulated in countries where people could not know of its absurdity. This letter, together with the *Semanarios* and a manuscript copy of the long letter of Caminos to me, was given to Commander Kirkland, to be made use of for the benefit of Lopez in Buenos Aires; and that officer, who had been so cautious lest he should violate the rules of war by conveying intelligence that might be used to the prejudice of Lopez, readily became his agent to carry away his secret despatches. Finding that Lopez had taken such measures to have his part of the correspondence published entire, while a material part of mine would be suppressed, I gave out the whole, together with a long letter I addressed to the English Minis-



ter, the Hon. William Stewart, on the condition of affairs in Paraguay; and it was all published in every daily paper in Buenos Aires, besides which a large edition was issued in pamphlet form, by the government, for circulation abroad.

My first duty after reaching Buenos Aires was to advise the admiral of our squadron of the outrage committed by Lopez in seizing two members of the American Legation at Asuncion, and urge him to go to their rescue. But previous to giving an account of the part taken by the squadron in this affair — not in vindicating the American flag, but in trailing it in the dust at the mandate of the tyrant of Paraguay — it becomes necessary to revert to events which had previously occurred.

As early as the 14th of October, 1867, I had sent a despatch to the Secretary of State, advising him that even then there was great fear among the people lest the evacuation of the capital should be ordered, to which I added, that I should not leave the town till so ordered by my government, unless it were as a prisoner. From the contents of this despatch, Mr. Seward inferred that my situation was liable to become dangerous, and so advised the Secretary of the Navy, and instructions were sent to Rear-Admiral Charles H. Davis, then commanding the United States South Atlantic Squadron, to send a gunboat to my relief.

The Wasp was accordingly despatched ostensibly on this service. Commander Kirkland was ordered to proceed in her "to the seat of war," and then communicate with me, and take me away if I should wish to leave. The "seat of war" at that time was Humaita, nearly two hundred miles below Asuncion, and for all practical purposes of relief Admiral Davis should have known that the Wasp might as well have been on the coast of Africa as below that point. He gave no instructions for her to go above the blockade, and apparently did not care whether she did or not, or whether she afforded any relief to me. As might have been foreseen, when the Wasp arrived near the blockading squadron, objection was made by the Brazilians to her going above it. This was a repetition of the outrage which had been at-



tempted on the Shamokin a year and a half before, but from which they receded when they saw that only force would avail to stop her. The question of principle or right having been previously settled, they would adhere to or waive their objection at this time according as they found the commander of the gunboat disposed to respect or disregard it.

As previously related, I advised Commander Kirkland that the Brazilians had no right to stop the Wasp, and not to heed their protest until they fired upon her or at least across her bows, — an act I had already proved they would never commit. Kirkland, however, disregarded my advice, and, reporting his exploits to the Admiral, took credit to himself for having shown his independence, and volunteered the opinion that it was very impertinent for a minister to make suggestions or recommendations to a naval officer.

Kirkland had been the favorite officer in command of a vessel when Godon was admiral of the squadron, and had doubtless learned from him that the most direct road to reward and promotion from the head of the Navy Department was to treat with contempt the advice or requests of the diplomatic agents of his government.

On arriving at Montevideo he wrote to Admiral Davis, then at Rio, of the refusal of the Brazilians to permit him to pass their blockade. His despatches were duly received by the Admiral, but so little importance did he attach to them that he allowed them to remain for several days unopened, and perhaps would never have looked at them had not his attention been called to them by General Webb.

The Minister of the United States in Rio de Janeiro at this time was General James Watson Webb, a gentleman having a national reputation as a diplomatist and political writer. Having been for more than thirty years editor and proprietor of a leading newspaper, and accustomed to deal as a statesman with all the great political questions of the time, foreign and domestic, his experience had admirably qualified him for any exigency that might arise in the career of a diplomat. This experience, joined to a very high order of ability, had not only



rendered him familiar with international law, but the frequent discussion of questions affecting our foreign policy had made him peculiarly sensitive to any infringement of the rights or honor of the United States. When these were touched, General Webb, as Minister, did not wait for instructions from home as to the course he should pursue. He took the responsibility of acting without waiting to learn whether or not his government would sustain him. For him to act, it was only necessary to know what the national honor and dignity required.

When the *Wasp* was despatched on her voyage in the month of April, 1868, for the purpose, not of carrying a minister to Paraguay, but of bringing him away, General Webb little thought that the Brazilians would again assume an attitude towards the United States from which they had been compelled most ungracefully to recede. Great was his surprise, therefore, to learn, on reading his morning paper, that the *Wasp* had been refused a passage through the blockade, and had returned to Montevideo. The paper boasted that the insolent Yankee had been snubbed, and the stars and stripes that had gone flaunting up the river had returned drooping to Montevideo. On reading this, General Webb lost no time in finding the Admiral and inquiring if it were indeed true that the *Wasp* had been sent back ; for if it were so, he supposed the Admiral must have known of it for some days, and would have notified him of the fact, in order that he might take such official action as the case demanded. But on meeting him the Admiral remarked he knew nothing of the matter. True he had received despatches from Commander Kirkland some days before, but they were lying unopened on his table. He would read them on returning to his flag-ship, and would then take the matter into consideration. But he could not see that the case demanded any unusual action from him. The government could be advised that the *Wasp* had been turned back, and then, if instructions should be sent to him to force the blockade at the risk of a war, it would be time enough to do it. General Webb said, " No, the issue must be made here and now ; advise me officially that



the Wasp has been turned back, and I will have the question settled at once. The allies shall not be permitted to keep a Minister of the United States a prisoner in a position declared dangerous by our government."

After much persuasion, which it may be presumed was so urgent that it might more properly be expressed by a stronger word, the Admiral gave him the official notice, and then General Webb addressed himself to the Brazilian government. The Ministry approved the course of the Marques de Caxias in refusing permission to the Wasp to pass the blockade. General Webb replied, "She must go through and she will go through; if not with your consent, still she will go to the relief of our Minister." The government, having indorsed Caxias, refused to yield; and General Webb then gave notice, that, unless it did so, the friendly relations between the United States and Brazil could no longer be maintained. The Wasp must be permitted to go through the blockade, or he would demand his passports, break up his Legation, and return to the United States.

This energetic action had its intended effect. The Ministry that approved the conduct of Caxias resigned, a new Ministry was appointed, and orders were sent to Caxias that when the Wasp might next appear she should be allowed to pass.

The Wasp was accordingly again despatched for Paraguay; and notwithstanding the vehemency with which General Webb had pressed the Brazilian government to grant permission for her to pass the blockade, nearly three months had passed from the time she had left Curupaiti, to return to Montevideo, before she returned and dropped anchor within the Paraguayan lines. As before related, she arrived barely in time to derange and defeat the plans of Lopez, not only towards all who were in the American Legation, but all the intelligent foreigners in his camp who might, if left alive, escape through the fortune of war, and publish to the world the truth in regard to his false accusations and pretended conspiracy. Had the return of the Wasp been delayed till instructions could have been received from Washington, she would have found no minister to take



away, and no member of his family, unless it were a little child too young to tell of anything which had transpired.

The arrival of the Wasp completely deranged the plans of Lopez. It had been his purpose to kill all the witnesses and blot out the record, and then to send forth to the world his own version of the occurrences which had led to their destruction; and on their own confessions he was to be justified, and they were to be adjudged by the world as having received their deserts. Her appearance had been most unwelcome to Lopez, and for several days after her arrival he hesitated whether to give up his cherished purposes or not. His position was embarrassing. He knew that if I were to escape I should expose him and his hideous acts to the world; and it was then too late to consummate his plans towards me, and yet make it appear that he had been forced to it for his own security or the "safety of the Republic." It was too well known that when the Wasp arrived I was still alive and well; and with all his precautions, including the destruction of the foreigners about his camp, it was impossible that many Paraguayans should not, either as prisoners or deserters, fall into the hands of the enemy. Then the whole plot would be exposed, and his well-woven web of testimony would be proved to be but a tissue of falsehoods invented by himself and ascribed to the victims whom he had killed in order to make sure that they should never deny them. That this plan was not carried out in all its parts many of those now alive, besides myself and the others in the United States Legation, have to thank General Webb. It is true he was not then aware of our terrible situation, for, so far as he knew, my relations were as friendly with Lopez as they had ever been. But he knew that for a long time I had been unable to communicate with the outer world, and that the conduct of Brazil was insulting to the honor and integrity of the United States. He knew, too, that our admirals on that station had shown a criminal indifference to the dignity and rights of their country, and he took the responsibility of forcing Brazil to the alternative of a rupture with the United States or of receding from her pretensions.



The indignation in Buenos Aires against Lopez, when it was known that he was torturing and killing all the foreigners in his power, was most intense. Many of his victims were Portefios, and many others had friends and relatives at the mouth of the river. The publication of my correspondence with Benitez and Caminos touched the pride of the Argentines, as in it I had made many reflections far from complimentary to the allies. I had remarked on the barbarism of making war, as they appeared to be doing, without fighting, and with the object of exterminating the Paraguayan people by starvation. These remarks were too just and true not to be keenly felt ; but it was not for them I was arraigned so much as for what I had said in regard to the "conspiracy." When I had been officially notified by Benitez that a conspiracy had been discovered the object of which was to assassinate Lopez, I had, in accordance with all diplomatic usage, expressed my felicitations at his escape from the threatened danger. I had declared my abhorrence of assassination ; and to the charges that the conspirators were making my Legation their headquarters, and thence carrying on a correspondence with their fellow-conspirators and with the Marques de Caxias, I had replied that I would not tolerate such persons in my house if such charges could be substantiated against them, but would instantly send adrift and denounce any one who could thus abuse my confidence and hospitality. It was at this that the gaucho republican editors of Buenos Aires and Montevideo were so vehemently indignant ;— that I would not allow my house to be used as a rallying-point for a conspiracy against such a wretch as I had shown Lopez to be ; that I should refuse to take part with conspirators, and denounce assassination as a crime, when the object was to destroy a monster who was daily murdering scores of the best people in Paraguay, — one whom I had denounced as an enemy of the human race !

On reaching Buenos Aires, my first duty was to fulfil my promise to Bliss and Masterman. I immediately wrote to Ad-



miral Davis and General Webb, both of whom were at Rio, advising them of the violation of the American flag by the seizure of these two members of my Legation, and that they had already been subjected to torture, and would inevitably be killed unless prompt measures were taken to rescue them.

In writing this work the disagreeable task has devolved upon me of exposing and denouncing the perverse and unpatriotic conduct of several officers of high rank in the American Navy. This exposure of the misconduct of the public servants of the United States I would gladly have omitted, had they not brought the naval service into contempt, and were it not a duty to inform the American people, so far as lies in my power, of the way in which their naval commanders demean themselves on foreign stations. The interests, the dignity, and the honor of the United States demand a most thorough and complete reorganization of the navy, which will only be brought about when the people who are taxed to maintain it shall learn to what purposes their money is devoted. I therefore shall make no apology for a digression in this place for the purpose of showing those defects in the present system which have kept the most meritorious officers in inferior and subordinate positions, while fawning sycophants and flatterers have through favoritism been advanced to places they were utterly unfit to fill. The system as it now is constitutes the admiral of a squadron the absolute despot over all who serve under him, so that whatever tyranny he may inflict on his subordinates they have practically no remedy. The autocratic powers of an admiral over all in his squadron lead him to suppose that in the ports which he visits he is the only representative of the United States, and that ministers or consuls have no more right to advise him, or suggest to him what the honor of the flag demands, than the midshipmen of his squadron. The system which makes the admiral so independent and despotic fosters this idea; and though the most of those in our naval service have the honor of the country too much at heart to allow their personal feelings to interfere with their public duties on foreign stations, yet when weak, vain, and malicious men are put into



such responsible positions, they may, as was seen in the case of these South American difficulties, bring great discredit on the naval service, and seriously compromise the relations of the government with other nations. A system that permits such abuses is certainly susceptible of reform and improvement.

When an admiral is ordered to a distant station to take command of the squadron there, the Secretary of the Navy, the only person to whom he is responsible, will be the better pleased the less he hears from him. If few questions, or disputes, or reports of courts-martial, are referred to him, he assumes that all is harmonious on board the fleet, and that the admiral is a competent and successful officer. Hence it is an object with them all that their reports shall show nothing but the regular routine which always is supposed to exist when the admiral is a just man and officers and men are respectful and obedient.

Once on a distant station, the admiral is the autocrat of the fleet. Of course he will have his favorites; that is human nature. Admirals, like other men, are susceptible to flattery, and when they are weak and vain, as it is possible for admirals to be, the sycophants and tale-bearers become his intimates, while those who scorn to act the flunky and the scandal-monger are subjected to a most galling tyranny. Every officer is anxious to be well reported to the Secretary of the Navy, as on his record made up by his admiral must he depend for promotion. Hence the admiral has absolute power over what the honorable and aspiring officer most highly prizes, his good name and his chance of promotion. If any injustice is done to an officer, the regulations provide that he may appeal to the Secretary of the Navy. But in practice it is left to the discretion of the admiral to send forward their complaints or not. Everything must first be submitted to the admiral before it is forwarded to the Secretary; and then if it be of such a nature that the admiral dreads to have it go forward, but fears to suppress it, he will try and conciliate the complainant and induce him to withdraw it. If, however, the wronged and insulted officer insists on sending forward his



statement, he knows that he will be in purgatory so long as he is subjected to the admiral's orders. Hence it is that, however intolerable the situation, however insolent and tyrannical the admiral, the aggrieved officer almost always finds it to his interest to submit in patience till death or the Secretary shall promote the admiral to another station. If the charges finally go before the Secretary, the admiral is sure to have his counter-charges ; and the Secretary as a rule listens to the admiral, and dismisses the complainant with a reprimand, usually equivalent to a notice that by his insubordination he has injured his standing at the Department.\*

\* "Q. What are the relations between you and Admiral Godon, — friendly or otherwise?

"A. Unfriendly. They had their origin mostly, nine tenths of them, on account of my having been on friendly terms with Mr. Washburn.

"Q. Prior to this period you were on friendly terms with the Admiral?

"A. There had been no rupture at all, no open rupture.

"Q. Were there unkind feelings before that?

"A. I had no very particular admiration for him. Still I did my duty. I had received several complimentary letters from him for services I had performed ; not very complimentary, but as complimentary as he was capable of writing. I had heard about this coal business, that Mr. Hale and some Americans had offered to furnish coal to enable Mr. Washburn to go up the river.

"Q. What was the motive of the Americans in doing that?

"A. I suppose they saw that the Minister was treated with indignity, and that it had the effect to bring our country in disrepute with the Argentine Republic ; that we were losing very much of the importance which we had already, and which we still held in that country as a nation. He (Admiral Godon) charged me with not having written to him about Mr. Washburn, his conversation, and his movements, while I had been acting as the senior officer in the ports of Montevideo and Buenos Aires. I told him that I did not consider that that was any part of my duty ; that my duty was to report to him everything official ; but as for writing of Mr. Washburn, what he said, or about his movements, or anything connected with him, I never could perform any service of that kind. I said it in considerable warmth, and he charged me with being disrespectful in language and manner. I disclaimed any intention of that kind. . . . I then stated to him that he had on more than one occasion outraged my feelings ; that I had no desire any longer to serve in his squadron ; that he had upon more than one occasion insulted me. He replied that I should go on board my ship ; that he would not put me under suspension. I obeyed the order. While smarting under this imputation of Admiral Godon, I applied officially to the Secretary of the Navy to be relieved from the command of the United States steamer *Kansas*, assigning as a reason that I had been promoted on the station to a commander, and was therefore entitled to a large vessel ; but that I had also reasons of a special



Admiral Charles H. Davis, to whom I communicated the circumstances of my departure from Paraguay, though an old man, and one who had been long in the navy, had seen but little sea service. Though a man of liberal education and courteous manners, he was utterly wanting in that tact or quality that carries with it obedience without assuming the appearance of authority. Incapable of organization, his time was devoted to trifling details, which so engaged his attention that matters of grave importance were neglected, and in a little while his squadron was, if not bordering on mutiny, in a state of constant broils and quarrels. Courts-martial were so frequent as to crowd upon each other, and the Admiral soon found himself in more than one sense lost at sea.

character which I would at some future day make known to the Department. I forwarded that communication to Admiral Godon, sending it by the coxswain of my boat, and indorsed on the outside of it the subject-matter of it. That application he returned to me, because it happened to be Sunday.

"Q. Was it the same Sunday that he had the dance and music aboard his vessel ?

"A. No, sir ; it was some other time ; I only heard of that ; it did not occur then. I sent the same application to him the next day. By some mistake I had indorsed the subject-matter on the outside of the envelope ; there I made a mistake. He then hoisted the signal for me to repair on board ; this was in the afternoon. When I went on board I was told by his acting fleet-captain, Lieutenant-Commander Marvin, that the Admiral was taking a nap, and that I should wait there. I was invited by that officer into his stateroom, or office adjoining the cabin, which invitation I declined to accept. I remained on the quarter-deck nearly an hour before the Admiral sent for me. He seemed to be very much excited, very much enraged. He referred to this application of mine. I told him that I had no desire to serve any longer in his squadron. I was standing at that time against the sideboard in the cabin, and was perfectly respectful in manner and in language. He spoke of my repeated disobedience of orders, and said that while I was serving in his command I was to understand that I must obey his orders. He accompanied this with an offensive and insulting gesture, shaking his finger in my face. I called his attention to it, and he repeated it. I again called his attention to it in these words : ' Admiral Godon, you are shaking your finger in my face.' He then ordered me in the most peremptory manner to go on board my vessel under suspension. As I was leaving the cabin I asked him if I should transfer the command to the executive officer. He shook his finger again towards me ; at that time I was some three or four feet from him ; he said that he knew what his duty was, and that I should go on board my ship under suspension. I remained under suspension two days, the first suspension that had ever been inflicted upon me in a naval service of over twenty-six years. By the rules and regulations of the service, I was obliged to



In the midst of his perplexities the Admiral leaned on his fleet-captain, whose unpopularity and insolence were the cause of many of his difficulties. This fleet-captain was Francis M. Ramsey, an officer very young for his position, and one who in his person afforded an excellent illustration of the defects in our naval system. During the years preceding the Rebellion, while the Navy Department was managed with a view to a dismemberment of the Union, he had connections at Washington who were able to second his own efforts to obtain rapid promotion. He had early learned that the surest road to advancement in the navy was by striving in all things to please the flag-officer of the squadron. Hence he had been promoted far beyond his deserts as an officer, and was fleet-captain of

confine myself to the cabin, about one third the size of this committee-room. I was not allowed to go to any other part of the ship, except, perhaps, to use the water-closet; that was on the upper deck. While under suspension I made a report in detail of this outrage to the Secretary of the Navy. I wish to state, however, that during this time I had orders to proceed to the coast of Africa on a cruise, to visit the ports from the Cape of Good Hope up. I reported all these indignities which I had endured. I attributed them mostly to my friendship for Mr. Washburn, and because I did not conform to the strict regulations of the service, which require the official communications to be sent to the commander-in-chief of the squadron. To protect myself from further indignities, which I knew he would visit upon me if I presented this report of his conduct in person, I confided it to Surgeon Wells of the Shamokin, requesting him to place the document on board the flag-ship as soon as he learned I had left the port of Montevideo. . . . I came home and reported my return to the Secretary of the Navy, and pressed this matter upon Mr. Welles as much as it was possible for a man to do. I courted the strictest investigation into my conduct. Mr. Welles said he was very sorry that our relations had been so unfriendly; that Admiral Godon, in a conversation with him on this subject, had disclaimed any intention of insulting me by his gesticulations; he said that Admiral Godon was a Frenchman; that he was naturally excitable, and that he had gesticulated in that way to him. I told him that I did not think Admiral Godon would dare to shake his finger in his face. Mr. Welles then seemed inclined to order an investigation. I had submitted documentary evidence refuting all the charges. Mr. Welles thought the matter had better drop; that it was unfortunate; that I had better let the matter die out. I told him it was a matter I thought of the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night, and that I would be willing to go out on the station and place myself under arrest for an official investigation into these troubles. He would not consent to that, and after an interview which lasted half an hour I left him." — *Paraguayan Investigation, testimony of Commander Clark H. Wells*, pp. 110, 111, 113.



the South Atlantic Squadron at the time that Admiral Davis was in command of it. He had a certain positiveness and self-assertion, qualities entirely wanting in the Admiral ; and these, united to a most offensive vanity, made up to some extent for his other defects, including a propensity to look after those petty details of buttons and formalities which men of average scope of mind seldom think of or notice. These qualities, while they caused him to be disliked in the squadron, commended him so much to Admiral Davis that he became virtually the commander of the fleet. But neither the actual nor the nominal admiral had any idea that the squadron might be called upon to perform any service which might interfere with his pleasure or convenience. They fully shared the opinion which Admiral Godon had so freely expressed, that they were under no obligations or responsibility to the diplomatic agents of the government, and were not bound in any way to defer to their wishes or requests. It was, therefore, far from agreeable to both of them, when the *Wasp* was turned back by the *Marques de Caxias*, that General Webb should so promptly resent the indignity to the United States, and compel Brazil to grant permission for her to pass the blockade. The consent, however, having been granted, there was no alternative but to send back the *Wasp*.

Until the *Wasp* had completed this latter voyage, there had been no rupture between the diplomatic and naval representatives. General Webb and Admiral Davis were on the most intimate and cordial terms, and supposed they were about to part as the best of friends, when the news came that the flag of the United States had been insulted by Lopez, and two members of the Legation in Paraguay had been arrested and carried off to prison and probable torture and execution. It was not necessary for a man to be "sudden and quick in quarrel" for an outrage of this kind, which was nothing more or less than an act of war against the United States, to arouse in him a feeling of intense indignation. Such a feeling was aroused in the mind of General Webb. The Admiral, however, seemed to regard it as a matter of little importance and



as calling for no unusual action on his part. Neither of them had received any official notice of what had transpired, and had only read the accounts in the newspapers of Buenos Aires, and their comments abusive of me. These the Admiral and his fleet-captain were disposed to listen to, while General Webb, without hesitation, assumed that they were scandalously and transparently false. But true or false, he said that it made no difference as to the duty of the Admiral. A gross outrage had been committed on the American flag, and instant redress should be demanded.

On the 5th of October, 1868, my letters to the Admiral and to General Webb were received by them. General Webb immediately sought the Admiral, to urge upon him that the case would admit of no delay. The Admiral, however, hesitated, and questioned the necessity of any action on his part. He said that my version of what had transpired in Paraguay was not to be credited, and my evidence of the violation of the flag was not sufficient for him to base any action upon. Finding that the Admiral was not disposed to do anything whatever, General Webb returned home mortified and heartsick. To all appearance the Admiral was playing into the hands of Lopez, who had already committed an act of war against the United States. But General Webb, anxious to avoid a rupture, wrote him a letter in terms such as one friend might employ in addressing another who he feared was about to make a fatal mistake. It was earnest and kind, and in no sense dictatorial, disclaiming all right to control the squadron, while forcibly representing the insult to the national flag.

This urgency on the part of the veteran statesman and diplomatist the fleet-captain chose to consider impertinent, and a very brief and grossly insulting note was sent in reply to the long and friendly letter of General Webb. This letter was doubtless written to warn the Minister that, in questions of grave interest affecting the honor of the country, he was not only not to control the Admiral, but not even to express his opinions. It had been notoriously owing to the action of General Webb that the *Wasp* had gone through the blockade



after having been once sent back ; and if his advice were now to be followed, the idea which many naval officers cherish and seek to promulgate, that they are the only representatives of the United States abroad, would be dispelled.\*

As before stated, the day for the departure of the squadron for the Plata had been already fixed when the news of the outrage of Lopez on the Legation in Paraguay reached Rio. Though not officially announced, the officers understood that they were to be ready to sail on Saturday, the 10th of October, and it had been so announced in the English newspaper published at Rio. But General Webb, on receiving information that Bliss and Masterman had been seized by Lopez, and that the only chance of their escape consisted in the promptness with which a force should be sent to rescue them, urged it upon the Admiral that he should not wait so long, but sail for the Plata as soon as he could possibly get ready. In this way he could save two whole days, and on the saving of that time might depend, not only the lives of the men seized, but the averting of a war on the tyrant who held them in his power. But the Admiral had chosen to quarrel with the Minister, and to show his independence he gave public notice that the fleet was not about to leave for the Plata nor for any other place. In fact, the departure of the squadron on a duty so urgent and pressing that every moment of unnecessary delay was criminal was deferred for three weeks, for no other purpose than to demonstrate the independence of the Admiral.

\* The letter of Admiral Davis was as follows : —

“ UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP GUERRIERE, (first-rate,)   
 RIO DE JANEIRO, October 8, 1868.

“ SIR, — I owe you, perhaps, an apology for not having acknowledged sooner the reception of your letter of the 6th instant, in which you give me the *unsolicited* benefit of your opinion on the subject of my official duties.

“ Since your opinion is formed without a knowledge of all the circumstances of the case, I may not, possibly, attach so much value to it as you seem to expect.

“ Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“ C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral Commanding South Atlantic Squadron.*

“ HON. J. WATSON WEBB, *United States Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Brazil.*”



## CHAPTER XXXII.

The Commercial Interests of Paraguay. — Policy of the United States in Regard to the Republics of South America. — M. T. McMahon appointed United States Minister to Paraguay. — Conflict of Testimony. — Admiral Davis's Excuses for Delay. — Extract from General Webb's Testimony. — Davis and McMahon. — Indorsement of Commander Kirkland. — His Letter to Admiral Davis.

**D**URING the whole time of my residence in Paraguay the commercial interests of that country with the United States amounted to nothing, and so long as the Lopez dynasty and system might last it never would amount to enough to justify our government in the expense of keeping a minister there. Only political reasons can be alleged for maintaining ministers, as is now done, at several South American republics. It had been the policy of the United States to be the first to recognize them as independent sovereignties after they had severed their connection with Spain; and the principal motive in keeping up diplomatic relations with several of them has always been to encourage them, amid their many changes and revolutions, to adhere, at all times, to the republican form of government. The despotism of Paraguay, however, was so absolute, and the prospect that our commercial relations with that region would be extended was so slight, that on resigning my office as minister it would have been my duty, except for the peculiar state of affairs existing at the time, to recommend that the office be discontinued. But in view of the fact that important political changes seemed impending in that part of the world, in which both the political and commercial interests of the United States might be concerned, I urgently requested that a successor should be appointed to my place. Another motive with me in making



this recommendation was the fact, that the people there, especially the foreigners, thought that the presence of the minister of a great power would give them a certain protection and security. In accordance with this request, another minister was appointed to succeed me. The person selected for the position was General Martin T. McMahon of New York. His appointment was made about the 1st of July, 1868; but as the State Department soon after received information that affairs in Paraguay were in a most uncertain and unsatisfactory condition, his departure was delayed till the latter part of September. The Admiral afterwards alleged, as a reason or excuse for his long delay in Rio, that he had received information that General McMahon was to leave New York on the American steam-packet for Rio on the 24th of September, and that he waited for him and the instructions which he might bring with him before starting for the Plata. This, however, was an afterthought, and I am sorry to say was not true. Though he had heard of General McMahon's appointment, he could not have had any definite information of the time of his leaving for his post at the time he postponed his departure for the Plata, nor of the instructions which he was to bring.\*

\* "He (the Admiral) stated distinctly that he should sail from Rio on the following Saturday, it being the 10th of October; or, if he did not get off on Saturday, the 10th, he would most certainly leave on Monday, the 12th, or possibly Tuesday, the 13th; but he had no doubt about getting off on the 10th. On Monday, the 5th of October, I met an unusual number of officers in the streets of Rio, and learned from one or more of them that they were there for the purpose of settling up their accounts, because the Admiral had given notice he would sail on Saturday, the 10th; and on reference to my correspondence with the Admiral it will be perceived that I say, in substance, to him, "that inasmuch as you are prepared to sail on the 10th, let me beg you to get off on Thursday, the 8th, and thereby save two days." At that time, bear in mind, the Admiral had full knowledge of the fact that these gentlemen of the Legation had been seized, and we were actually corresponding about the necessity of his moving to their relief. It appears to me, therefore, utterly impossible, that on the 5th of October, when he refused to move, his "motive" in so doing was, as he alleges *now*, to await the arrival of General McMahon; and it is equally impossible that at that time he could have known, as he says he did, that General McMahon would arrive in the next steamer. Had it been his intention to await the arrival of the new minister on the 20th or 21st of October, why announce to me, and to all at



It was not till after McMahon had actually reached Rio, which he did about the 20th of October, that the Admiral ventured to put forth as a reason for his delay the fact that he was waiting for his arrival. As soon, however, as he knew he had come, he sought to capture him and make him an ally as against General Webb. The reader has seen how Admiral Gordon refused to give passage both to General Asboth and myself at a time when no other means of passage was available, and from that would infer that it is contrary to the naval regulations for war vessels to convey the ministers of their own nation. But no sooner had General McMahon reached Rio, than Admiral Davis, without waiting to be asked, invited Minister McMahon and his family, consisting of three besides

my table, that he would sail on Saturday, the 10th ; and why give notice to that effect to the squadron, in order that the officers might settle up their accounts ?

"Anterior to September, General McMahon had been appointed Minister to Paraguay, and ordered to proceed to his post of duty. The State Department, learning from me the difficulties that existed in regard to the Wasp, and that the Wasp had been stopped by the allies in passing up to Asuncion, instructed General McMahon, on the 18th of August, *not* to leave the country until he received further orders. On the 2d of September, 1868, Mr. Seward addressed to General McMahon the following : —

" ' When, on the 18th of August last, you were on the eve of your departure for Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, as Minister Resident of the United States to that Republic, this Department by direction of the President, requested you to remain in the United States until you should receive further instructions. The occasion of that direction was, that Rear-Admiral Davis, who commands the United States South Atlantic Squadron, had just then reported that he had sent the United States ship-of-war Wasp up the Parana, for the purpose of bringing away your predecessor, Mr. Charles A. Washburn, and his family, from Asuncion. . . .

" ' To-day I received from Mr. Webb a despatch, which bears date August 7, and which came from London by cable, in which despatch he says that the Brazilian Ministry has yielded to his request, and that the Wasp goes to Asuncion.

" ' The information thus received is deemed sufficient to warrant your proceeding at once, by the *next United States steamer*, to the seat of your legation.'

"Now, the next United States steamer was to sail September 23. That despatch most probably did not reach General McMahon, in New York, until the 4th. By what means, then, could the Admiral know of its existence at Rio on the 5th of October ? If General McMahon wrote to Captain Ramsey, by the steamer of the 5th, via England, the day after the receipt of this letter from Washington, it would not reach England before the 17th. There is no telegraph from England to Rio Janeiro, or any part of Brazil, and the first steamer from England would



himself, to take passage to Montevideo on board the flag-ship *Guerriere*.

General McMahon, having been advised to confer with General Webb on arriving at Rio, did so, notwithstanding his newly fledged friendship for the Admiral. The latter freely expressed his views on the situation, and in an official letter gave it as his opinion that Lopez had committed an act of war against the United States, and that therefore no diplomatic relations could be held with him till he had restored Bliss and Masterman, and given satisfaction for the outrage on the American flag.

In my letter from Buenos Aires to Admiral Davis, I had, after telling him of the circumstances attending the seizure of Bliss and Masterman, advised him that I should remain

be that of 20th of September, from Liverpool, due in Rio in twenty-four days, she being a freight propeller. That would make its receipt in Rio fall on the 14th of October, whereas my correspondence with the Admiral, in regard to this movement to Paraguay, commenced on the 5th of October, and terminated on the 10th, the very day which he had fixed for his departure, my application for his departure having been made and refused on the 5th. It appears, then, to be morally and physically impossible that any information could have been in the Admiral's possession, by private letter, apprising him that General McMahon would arrive in the steamer of the 23d, and I therefore again give it as my firm belief that the Admiral did intend to sail on the 10th, without having any idea of the arrival of McMahon, and that he remained in the harbor of Rio, not for the purpose of receiving General McMahon, as he alleges, and of whose arrival he could not have knowledge, but because, as I have said to the government, I, as Minister, had urged him to expedite his departure from the 10th to the 8th. I consider the declaration now made, that he knew that McMahon was coming, a mere subterfuge, not sustained by what possibly could be the facts of the case, and palpably an afterthought. But the Admiral also says that he waited for the Minister to Paraguay, 'who had a right to be consulted and needed to take direction, and that was the intention of the government, *as he was specially instructed to act in co-operation with me, and I in co-operation with him.*'

"Now mark this additional specific reason assigned for delay. The committee asks the Admiral: Did General McMahon, when he arrived on the 21st, bring any instructions? The Admiral answers in the negative. It is true that the government did expect and did order that General McMahon and the Admiral should co-operate, but *not* previously to the 5th of October. That order was not given except in a despatch dated Washington, November 21, which would arrive at Rio only on the 20th of December; and yet the Admiral says that a knowledge of that fact on the 5th of October, forty-six days before its existence, induced him to determine not to move until General McMahon had arrived."—*Paraguayan Investigation, testimony of General J. Watson Webb*, pp. 257, 258.



there to await his arrival, in order to give him any further information that it might be necessary for him to have, in order to act with a full understanding of the situation. I did not then suppose that there would ever be the least difference of opinion as to what ought to be done, and was greatly surprised, after waiting for some two or three weeks, to learn that a quarrel had arisen between General Webb and the Admiral. From the Admiral, whom I had never known personally, I received a most polite and friendly letter, congratulating me on my escape. From General Webb I received another letter, advising me of the difference he had had with the Admiral, partly because of his apathy and indifference to the honor of the flag, and partly because he had given as a reason for his inaction his disbelief in my statements, and alleging that he had other information, derived from Commander Kirkland, in regard to matters in Paraguay, that conflicted with my account of them. But General Webb, in his letter to the Admiral, said it mattered very little what Kirkland had reported, and added: "The duly accredited Minister to the government of Paraguay has made his report, which I have placed in your possession, and every word of which I indorse. . . . Both you and I know him to be the duly accredited Minister of the United States, and his testimony, which we have, it is our bounden duty to respect."

As the reader is aware, I had had before this a very serious dispute with Admiral Godon, whose conduct had been such as to give the people of the Plata anything but a favorable impression of his fitness for the position he occupied. But with all his insolence, his efforts to defeat or embarrass me in the performance of my official duties, he had never called in question any statement I had ever made. But with Davis, I find that even before he knew me he had quarrelled with General Webb, and to justify himself in that quarrel he questions my veracity!

This was certainly an embarrassing position. I had seen my flag violated, my rights as a minister outraged, and two members of my suite, as much entitled to legation privileges as I was, had been forcibly torn away from me and carried off to



torture and probable death. Their last words to me were an appeal to notify the Admiral of our squadron of their situation. I had done so, and I was the only witness that could testify to the outrage. And yet the Admiral would not take my word, but remained at Rio to show his independence.

Until I received this letter from General Webb, I had not suspected but that Commander Kirkland was acting in the most perfect good faith towards all parties. On the voyage down the river he had repeated to me so many times the conversations he had held with Lopez, — both while he was threatening to keep me a prisoner and afterwards, — in which he made it appear that it was by his threats to Lopez that the tyrant had been induced to let me go, that I supposed his conduct could not be too highly commended. In my letter to the Admiral, I made use of the strongest terms of approval of his conduct, based entirely on his own version of the service he had done me.\*

What information Admiral Davis received from Commander Kirkland, at the time he alleged it as a reason for discrediting me, he has never made public. He could have no knowledge of what had occurred in Asuncion, as he was not permitted to go there, and at the time of the arrest of Bliss and Master-

\* "BUENOS AIRES, September 30, 1868.

"MY DEAR SIR, — . . . I wish here to give my testimony in regard to the firmness and good judgment displayed by Captain Kirkland in treating with Lopez. No one who has not lived in Paraguay can realize the delicate nature of the task he had to perform,—that was to get me and my family unharmed out of the country. Fortunately he speaks the Spanish language fluently, and had known Lopez before, and knew that he was the most arrant coward on the face of the earth. He therefore knew how to take him ; and when Lopez threatened to keep me as a prisoner, he talked to him in such a manner that the craven wretch quailed before him and said he would let me go. And this defiant attitude he maintained during all the time he was detained there by Lopez, waiting for me to come on board the Wasp. He repelled the rude officiousness of Lopez's officers as though he had the Dunderberg, the Monadnock, and Miantonomoh at his back, and fairly cowed Lopez and attained his object, where a man of less nerve or tact would have failed entirely. I trust that this important service may be put to his credit and allowed to draw interest.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"CHARLES A. WASHBURN.

"REAR-ADMIRAL C. H. DAVIS, *United States flag-ship Guerriere,*  
*Rio de Janeiro."*



man was some twenty miles distant. While at Lopez's headquarters he had no communication with any persons except Lopez and Madam Lynch, unless others were present to be spies upon them; and therefore whatever he wrote to Admiral Davis that conflicted with my published statements must have been received either from Lopez or his paramour. What object Kirkland could have at that time in becoming the mouthpiece of Lopez, and what was the nature of the statements he made to Davis while acting in that character, has never to my knowledge been divulged, and is, I believe, a secret among the real conspirators, Davis, Ramsey, McMahon, ✓ and Kirkland,—conspirators engaged in a plot to destroy the testimony of a minister of their own government, and serve the interests of the worst tyrant that ever figured on the page of history. From an expression of McMahon in a despatch to the Secretary of State, written while he was still at Rio, October 27, 1868, an inference may be drawn of the general character of Kirkland's letters. In this despatch McMahon says he learns "that all prisoners held for political offences in Paraguay are treated with no unnecessary harshness."

How could he learn that? No one but Kirkland or myself could have brought the news, and if Kirkland had any such knowledge he had derived it from Lopez or Madam Lynch. I had published to the world that Lopez was torturing and murdering all the best people in Paraguay for alleged political offences, and McMahon had read my letters. Yet he writes to the Secretary of State that he is not treating them with unnecessary harshness. Evidently the plan by this time is already conceived, and McMahon, Davis, and Kirkland have determined to become the apologists and champions of Lopez. Though I have told them his hands are reeking with the blood of hundreds of foreigners and thousands of Paraguayans, including some of his own nearest relatives, they see that their interest lies in discrediting me, and in taking Lopez's own words as reported to them through Kirkland.

As a part of this conspiracy,—and now I talk of a real



conspiracy,—it is thought prudent to send abroad for publication a statement to neutralize the effect which it is surmised my accounts of Lopez's atrocities may have on the people of the United States. This was accordingly done. Immediately after the newspapers throughout the country had given currency to my version of Lopez's barbarities, another statement was sent forth as coming from Kirkland, in which Bliss and Masterman are represented as being in no danger, as Lopez had assured him that he was still desirous of maintaining friendly relations with the United States. So it would seem that Lopez still had good friends in the American Navy, and that his outrage on the flag did not prejudice him in their minds.

The official report made by Kirkland to Admiral Davis was dated September 22, but that contains no reference to the treatment of prisoners in Paraguay for political offences, and therefore McMahon's knowledge of it, which he communicated to Mr. Seward, must have been derived from private and unofficial letters which have not been made public. In the meanwhile, Kirkland, having sent to the Admiral his report of the trip, remained at Montevideo, awaiting further orders from Rio; but before he could receive any reply, he sent another letter to the Admiral, unofficial, in which he pretended to give an account of his first interview with Lopez. I give the following extract :—

“On the 2d of September I first visited President Lopez. I inquired after Mr. Washburn, and Lopez replied, ‘I am sorry to say we are very bad with Mr. Washburn.’ I said that I was very sorry to hear it. Lopez said, ‘Mr. Washburn is an enemy to Paraguay.’ I said I did n't believe it; and he continued: ‘I do not doubt it; I have the proofs.’ I then said again: ‘I do not believe it, but if he is, it is none of my business.’ Lopez then said: ‘I wish you to take a part in this, and try to arrange the matter between myself and Mr. Washburn, as I am very loath to take any step inimical to the United States.’ I replied that my mission was a specific one; that I was not a diplomat, and that I would not interfere in the matter in any way. He remarked that, unless the matter could be arranged, he feared he



would have to detain Mr. Washburn ; and I answered him, as nearly as I can recollect, as follows : ‘ Any steps taken against the United States Minister will be avenged by that government, even should the Minister be in the wrong in the first instance. Your duty is to allow him to depart peaceably, and to refer your complaint, if you have any, to the President of the United States ; and you may rest assured that if the Minister has been guilty of unfriendly acts to the government of Paraguay while residing in your country he will be called to account for it ; but if you take the law in your own hand, and insult his sacred diplomatic character by such an act, a fleet of six light-draught monitors, with fifteen and twenty-inch guns, which was in Pernambuco, bound to this river for the purpose of forcing the Brazilian blockade, will take sides with the allies, will pass your batteries, knock down your towns and cities, and the government of the United States will hunt you over the world, and demand you from any government that may have given you shelter. I shall wait a proper time, and if Mr. Washburn is not put on board, or I am not allowed to embark him with the means at my command, I shall return immediately, and report to the government that he is a prisoner at your hands.’ Lopez then asked how long I would remain. I replied, ‘ Only a few days, as I have strict orders on the subject.’ Lopez, after a short while, said : ‘ You are right ; I will let Mr. Washburn go, and will represent his conduct to his government.’ . . . I have no idea that Lopez’s remark was intended as any threat against Mr. Washburn’s liberty ; but he was very anxious to have the ship in the river, if possible, and thought he could accomplish that by temporizing.”

In his first version of this interview with Lopez, made to me verbally on board the *Wasp*, Kirkland represented that he made use of much stronger language than he has given in this account of it, subsequently sent to the Admiral, and at that time he did not disclaim the credit of having frightened the tyrant by his threats of the vengeance of the United States. He had heard many rumors of the atrocities of Lopez but a short time before, and when he went on shore to visit him was quite uncertain of his reception, or of the dangers before him. He watched the countenance of the despot as he talked to him, and could see the suppressed anger raging behind his



malignant, cowardly eyes, and was watching for the first sign of a movement against himself, or for an order in Guarani to the surrounding guards to seize him, prepared to make an end of Lopez sooner than be arrested. Kirkland is the only person, so far as I know, that ever went armed into the presence of Lopez, and with the intention of killing him sooner than be arrested. It was from his own version of the interview with Lopez that my letter of indorsement and approval of his conduct was based. I then believed, as I believe now, that Kirkland conducted himself with great judgment and tact in all his intercourse with Lopez up to the time when he had succeeded in frightening the tyrant from his purpose of keeping me. For that service I wished to do him all possible credit, and when afterwards I learned that he repudiated my gratitude, and was seeking to invalidate my words by representing that Lopez was not the wretch I knew him to be, and did not treat his prisoners unkindly or with any "unnecessary harshness," I was forced to the conclusion that Lopez, having given me up, decided to try and make Kirkland his friend,—and succeeded.

In the same letter to the Admiral, as if to show, without saying so, that he discredited my words, Kirkland wrote the following :—

"Mr. Washburn told me that he had never heard anything of a revolution or conspiracy against the government ; but, on one occasion, Mrs. Washburn, when her husband was not present, said that there was a plan to turn Lopez out of power, and to put in his place his two brothers, Venancio and Benigno. As Mrs. Washburn had entirely agreed with her husband when he emphatically denied ever having heard of any plan, this admission on her part rather astonished me ; but I did not comment on it."

In all the "declarations" of Lopez's tortured witnesses, and in all the statements made at different times by the persons who subsequently escaped from his power, no allusion was ever made to this plan to turn out Lopez and put his brothers in his place. No one of the survivors had ever heard of it except Mrs. Washburn, and the improbability, not to say impossibility,



that she could ever have made such a remark, is, therefore, sufficiently evident.

It may be here remarked, that when the Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs were engaged in the investigation of the Paraguayan difficulties, all the friends and apologists of Lopez, including Davis, McMahon, Kirkland, and Ramsey, were categorically questioned if they had any evidence derived from persons beyond the reach of the tyrant that any conspiracy had existed in Paraguay, and they could allege nothing except this remark that Kirkland said was made by Mrs. Washburn, and one or two sentences in my correspondence with Benitez, in which I had spoken of the conspiracy as if I had believed in it. All who have since escaped, and have spoken in regard to the matter, have expressed their belief that there never was any conspiracy, so that the only witnesses to the contrary are Mrs. Washburn and myself.

At length, on the 28th of October, the Admiral started for Montevideo in the *Guerriere*, having Minister McMahon and his family on board. The smaller vessels of the squadron had sailed a day or two before. Nearly a month had elapsed since he first heard of the seizure of Bliss and Masterman, but by his delay he had taught the lesson to American ministers, that in all cases in which the honor of their country is concerned they are not to be consulted, and that if they offer any opinion they may be rudely insulted, and the insult will be indorsed by the Secretary of the Navy.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

Investigation of Paraguayan Affairs by Congress. — Its Object. — The Course taken by the Naval Department. — Extracts from the Report of the Congressional Committee. — Admiral Godon censured. — Extracts from the Testimony of Captain Clark H. Wells. — Interview with Admiral Davis and General McMahon. — The Admiral's Forgetfulness. — He determines to demand the Release of Bliss and Masterman. — Extract from a Letter to McMahon. — His Subsequent Course. — Antecedents of McMahon. — Return to the United States. — Naval Courtesy. — Captain Ramsey.

THE reader who has followed me thus far in my "Reminiscences of Diplomacy under Difficulties," may object to so long a digression from the events in Paraguay to the conduct of officers in the American Navy. It may also be objected that in a work of this kind, intended to be more permanent than the ephemeral literature of the newspapers, the faults of our own countrymen should be made public. It is certainly a task far from agreeable to expose the doublings and dishonesty of men to whom is intrusted to some extent the guardianship of the national honor, and the person who does it is sure to bring upon himself a crowd of assailants who, if they cannot disprove his facts, will impugn his motives. Before he ventures on such a labor, therefore, he should be very sure that there is no vulnerable point in his own armor. These possible objections have all been duly considered. When I first escaped from Paraguay, knowing that I brought away with me the good-will of every person in that country except Lopez and Madam Lynch, and that hundreds felt grateful to me for the efforts I had made, at great risk to myself and family, to serve and save them, and that every one who had ever lived there, and could appreciate my situation, would approve my every act, I did not anticipate that the



acknowledgment for all these services would be a general condemnation, based not only on the ridiculous and self-contradicting charges of Lopez and the tirades of the allies, but on the reports of the officers of our own squadron. I then said that the truth would at some day be made clear, and that I could afford to wait. At that time I had nothing but my own unsupported word to put against that of Lopez and his multitude of tortured witnesses, against the allies, and against the higher officers of the South Atlantic Squadron.

Afterwards, when Bliss and Masterman were released, and I had some witnesses, they prepared a memorial to Congress, asking an investigation into the treatment they had received from Lopez, and also at the hands of Admiral Davis and his officers. This memorial was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and by a resolution which, at my instance, was made to call for an investigation into the conduct of the officers of the squadron, and that of "the late Minister to Paraguay," — myself. I desired that the investigation might be thorough, and that those officers who had been so free to defend Lopez and assail me might have a chance to make good their statements, and if, in their zeal to serve a tyrant, they had disgraced the naval service, that the public should be informed of it. It was not enough that the head of the Navy Department should know it, for I had learned that it was a rule, scarcely ever departed from, in that Department, to sustain the higher officers in the service, whatever they might do. The Secretary of the Navy had indorsed and approved throughout the conduct of Admiral Godon, notwithstanding which the Committee on Foreign Affairs, after full investigation, severely condemned it.\* The conduct of Ad-

\* "This manifest indifference on the part of Admiral Godon to the reasonable request of an American Minister continued for a considerable period of time, and finally resulted in excuses which soon became as numerous as they were frivolous. . . .

"That this excuse of an 'insufficiency of coal' was a mere evasion of the Admiral is furthermore apparent from his own testimony. . . .

"Thus, after a delay of over a year, for which there was, in our opinion, no justifiable excuse on the part of Admiral Godon, Mr. Washburn was permitted to reach his destination.



miral Davis was likewise approved throughout by the same Secretary, Gideon Welles, who not only justified him in all he had done, but induced the Secretary of State also to write a letter of commendation.

The Vice-Admiral of the Navy, now the Admiral (Porter), when called before the investigating committee to give his testimony in regard to the usages of the navy, found nothing in the conduct of Godon, Davis, Ramsey, or Kirkland to condemn, but approved and indorsed it all, and testified that they were all most marvellously proper men, and ornaments to the country and the service. In fact, so explicit was he in his approval, that he justified Davis for treating Bliss and Masterman as prisoners, though the latter had under oath denied that he had thus treated them. Had he hung them both at the yard-arm of the Wasp at the order of Lopez, he would doubtless have been as fully sustained by the Navy Department. In the naval service it is understood that there is no appeal to any power but to the Secretary. No wronged subordinate officer can appeal to the public through the press without incurring the liability of being court-martialed. His complaints to the Secretary must first be delivered unsealed to the admiral, who will forward them or not, according to his own pleasure. If sent forward, they are accompanied by the admiral's justification and counter-charges, and the difficulty is hushed up by the Secretary, always, however, leaving the admiral unscathed and the public ignorant of his tyranny and injustice. That the public may remain quiet and acquiescent

"During this investigation your committee have seen, with regret, the existence, among the officers of the South Atlantic Squadron, of a feeling of extreme bitterness and malevolence, accompanied with acts of superciliousness and petty tyranny totally unworthy of their position, derogatory to our national character, and subversive of that efficiency in the naval service which can spring only from harmony and proper respect on all occasions. The necessity and justification of these remarks are to be found in the accompanying testimony.

"In this connection we also feel compelled to advert to a feeling of disrespect exhibited by Admiral Godon towards our diplomatic representatives with whom he came in contact, and which probably furnishes the motive for his course in this matter." — *Paraguayan Investigation, Report of Committee on Foreign Affairs*, pp. iii, v, xxvi.



in the enormous expense of the navy, it must be kept uninformed of the tyranny practised within it, and of the utter uselessness of the squadrons that are maintained on foreign stations, at the cost of millions annually. To keep one first-rate, like the *Guerriere*, flag-ship of Admiral Davis, abroad, costs more money than the whole diplomatic service of the United States ; and yet, though Admiral Godon made himself the friend and "confidential" adviser of the allies, in preventing an American Minister from reaching his post of official duty, and bitterly persecuted the best officers in his squadron because they would not approve his conduct and act a part unbecoming a gentleman,\* and though Admiral Davis meekly submitted to the indignities offered by Lopez to the American flag, without pretending to resent them, yet the conduct of both admirals was approved and commended by Mr. Secretary Welles. When such acts were approved, certainly it was time for a power stronger than the Secretary to take the matter in hand, and make a thorough investigation. In the ordinary routine of the navy, under its present system, which prevents the public from knowing how their money is squandered, and renders the department an *imperium in imperio*, these abuses might go on indefinitely if their exposure were dependent on persons subject to the authority of the Secretary. They cannot appeal to the public without a certainty of being ignominiously dismissed from the service, after which, as disgraced men, they have little or no influence. Hence it is for persons in no way connected with the navy to expose the abuses within it, if the people are ever to be informed of them. But as it is seldom that any one not in the navy becomes cognizant of the tyranny and wrongs which are perpetrated on distant stations by

\* "He (Admiral Godon) charged me with not having written him about Mr. Washburn, his conversation and his movements, while I had been acting as senior officer in the ports of Montevideo and Buenos Aires. I told him that I did not consider that that was any part of my duty; that my duty was to report to him anything official: but as for writing of Mr. Washburn, what he said, or about his movements, or anything connected with him, I never could perform any service of that kind."—*Paraguayan Investigation, testimony of Captain Clark H. Wells*, p. 110.



officers high in rank and command, it is certainly my duty as one of those in another branch of the public service who have been forced, not only to witness, but to suffer from the arrogant pretensions on one hand, and the humiliating concessions on the other, of these same officials, to fully expose their delinquencies as a part of my "Reminiscences of Diplomacy under Difficulties."

On the 4th of November, the *Guerriere* arrived at Montevideo, and shortly after Admiral Davis and General McMahon took passage on the *Wasp* for Buenos Aires, where I had the honor of being visited by both of them at my hotel. I now learned for the first time that the Admiral had decided to go to Paraguay and demand the release of Bliss and Masterman, and was assured by him that the report I had heard of his having expressed doubts in regard to my representations of the conduct of Lopez, and the condition of affairs in Paraguay was utterly untrue. He had never said anything of the kind. This was a flat contradiction of what General Webb had written to me; and I afterwards had other evidence that would indicate that the Admiral was forgetful.

He nevertheless seemed disinclined to believe that Lopez was quite so bad as I had represented him to be, and declined to advise me as to the course he should pursue in case Bliss and Masterman had already been executed or Lopez should refuse to give them up. I warned him that Lopez would try very hard to deceive him, and that he could manufacture testimony at pleasure. From my intimate knowledge of all the circumstances of Lopez's character and his system of diplomacy, I thought I could be of some service in the negotiations if I could return as a passenger. But the Admiral thought himself too acute to be overreached, and declined my offer; and though I knew perfectly well that a sharper man than he, and one more sensible of the difficulties of the task, would be hoodwinked and imposed upon, I could not with propriety tell him so. I advised him, however, without reserve, and also General McMahon, of the obstacles they



would have to encounter. To the latter I expressed the opinion that he ought not to go near Lopez, nor present his credentials, till he received further instructions from the government. In order to advise him more definitely in regard to the property of certain persons that had been left with me, and to enlist him in behalf of friends whom I had left in Paraguay, if they should survive till Lopez was overthrown, I wrote him a letter, from which, as it contained the impressions then fresh in my mind just after my escape from the despot's power, and was addressed to one who might soon have an opportunity of verifying their correctness, I make the following quotations :—

“ We left many friends in Paraguay, concerning whose fate we feel the most painful interest. To spite us, we fear, Lopez may have robbed, imprisoned, tortured, or shot those known to be our friends. We are terribly anxious to know their fate, and depend on you to advise us. Of all the Paraguayans, the family in which we take the most interest is that of the late Don José Mauricio Casal, living, if still in their old home, near the villa of Limpio, some five or six leagues from Asuncion. Both Mrs. Washburn and myself were more intimate with that family than any other, visiting them often and being visited by them in return. On leaving, I made a request that my horses, four in number, and cows, of which I had about ten, might be sent out to this family. I am afraid, however, they were not sent, but, instead, our good friends were sent off to the Cordilleras, or were taken in irons to the army, and perhaps the backs of the pretty Conchita and Anita scored with the lash. We charge you, both of us, to inquire particularly about this family, and let us know what became of them. Should the war end and they be left in their old home, you will find their house the most delightful place to visit in all Paraguay.

“ Another friend in whom we take great interest is the widow Doña Carmelita Gill de Cordal. She lived close by, and visited us very often. She is a sister of the Captain Gill who was one of the heroic defenders of Humaita. Few men living have been under fire so much as he. But, because he and his handful, surrounded by ten times their number, and literally starving, with no possible chance of escape, surrendered, Lopez has published him as a



traitor, very probably confiscated the property of all his family and sent them into exile, or, perhaps, taken them in irons to his headquarters to be shot. That is his style. So he has served many others under similar circumstances. Try and advise us of the fate of our spunky, witty, confidential, Lopez-hating little friend. When the war began she had a husband, who was one of the richest men in Paraguay, and three children. Her husband was taken as a common soldier, and sent into the ranks barefoot, and killed in the first battle in which he took part. Now we fear she has nothing left but her iron anklets.

"Several Englishmen and one German, in the employ of Lopez, sent away their money by me. It was brought down by the Wasp. Lest it might be seized in Buenos Aires and confiscated, I sent it to Montevideo, and ordered it to be delivered to the London and River Plate Bank, and the part that was to be sent to England was to be forwarded as directed on the boxes, and the rest was to be put to the credit of the owners in said bank. The Wasp charged two and a half per cent as freight, which was all the expense incurred.

"You will understand that I write now in view of contingencies that may never arise. I take it for granted that after Lopez's insults to me, and his seizure of two members of my Legation, you will not have any communication with him till the government has been advised of his conduct, and has deliberately resolved on its course of action. I am confident that our government will never resume diplomatic relations with Lopez. I have denounced him as a common enemy, and have no doubt my course will be approved. But a common enemy cannot long stand against the world. He must soon bite the dust, and my hope is that this ogre may be finished off before he has destroyed all my friends in Paraguay. In that case you may learn something of the condition of those who remain, if any such there be, and the way the others were murdered by the grim monster. It is in view of such contingencies I beg of you to advise me of the fate of some of the dearest friends I have ever known. I never was so anxious to leave a place as I was to leave Paraguay, and I never left a place with so sad a heart. I had the feeling that all who had been particular friends to me and mine were to be put to death — perhaps after torture — for that crime.

"But I could do no more for anybody, and the more I defied Lopez the more provoked he was to visit his wrath on my friends,



and at the time of the last arrival of the Wasp he was on the point of proceeding to violent measures against me. This fact will appear if any of those persons immediately about him shall escape to tell what they know. But he does not intend they shall escape. His plan is to destroy all the witnesses. I beg of you to see if all I now write is not confirmed ; and if you will advise me from time to time of what you may learn, I will thank you very sincerely, and reciprocate in any way that I may be able."

Little did I think, while penning that letter, that a few months later General McMahon would return from Paraguay, knowing nothing of the friends for whom I had solicited his good offices, but abounding with admiration for the great Lopez, the murderer of most of them ; and that he would return to the United States and endeavor to convince the government that Lopez was invincible, was a great and good man, dearly beloved by his people ; and that the diplomatic relations that had been suspended by his recall should be immediately renewed.

General Martin T. McMahon, who was appointed by Andrew Johnson to succeed me as Minister to Paraguay, was born in Canada, and is of Irish parentage. Left an orphan in his youth, he was taken in charge by Archbishop Hughes of New York, and educated at his college. At the breaking out of the Rebellion, he volunteered as a soldier on the Union side, and rose during the war to the rank of brigadier-general of volunteers, having throughout a good military record. In the long list of brigadiers who were brevetted as major-generals after the war, his name was included. Having been educated as he was, not unnaturally he was earnestly devoted to the Catholic Church, and certain magnates of that body united in recommending him to the President as a proper person to send as Minister to Mexico. A more eminent soldier, though probably no braver, General W. S. Rosecrans, and one, it is to be presumed, more faithful to the Catholic Church, was appointed to Mexico ; and as the mission to Paraguay was vacant, McMahon was appointed to it. With such antecedents it was hardly to be expected that he could ever become



the champion of a tyrant who had murdered the bishop and nearly all the priests in Paraguay, after subjecting them to every imaginable indignity and suffering. Yet the champion of such a character he became.\*

\* There were three native Americans in Paraguay at the time I left, besides Mr. Bliss, — John A. Duffield, Thomas Carter, and a man by the name of Sheridan. Manlove had been already executed. There were also two naturalized Americans, — José Font and Leonard Charles. Duffield and Charles escaped by being taken prisoners by the Brazilians; the others are all supposed to have been killed by Lopez. From a letter received from Duffield, dated July 6, 1869, I give the following extracts, as indicating the zeal of my successor in looking after the interests of his countrymen.

"My True and Considerate Friend, Mr. Washburn: —

"My dear Sir, — I received your note of November 11, 1868, May 18, 1869, enclosed to me in a letter and package of books from your successor, General M. T. McMahon, in which letter he gives no reasons for the detention of said note. . . . I was asked by a great many natives, and also by the families of murdered foreigners, why the United States wished to prolong such a heart-rending, bloody war by sending a Minister here to back up a remorseless tyrant and coward, at a time when he was driven out of his last stronghold, and every hope fled of being able to stand against his enemy. At this crisis the General arrived to congratulate a phenomenon of tyranny, who had just wallowed in the blood of six hundred foreigners whom he ordered to be first tortured and then lanced to death, without trial or explanation of any kind. Nor was he contented with taking the lives of innocent, industrious foreigners and natives, but also took their property, even to the wearing-apparel of the widows and orphans. . . . I will mention again, that a Christian country sends a Minister to congratulate the author of all these inhuman barbarities in its President's name, — as McMahon mentioned in his oration to Lopez when he presented his credentials, — to congratulate a cowardly despot who has never yet been nearer to a battle-field than two leagues, to congratulate a consummate, blood-thirsty despot, immoral in his habits as any savage or brute beast, and who boasts of having ruined hundreds of women; and it is well known that lately he ordered several of these same women to be ignominiously put to death for some trifling word which they said, or were accused of saying. . . . I will finish this painful subject by giving you a short account of General McMahon's regret on being recalled, also the last farce or petty piece on his departure. In the first place, he sent me a letter and the package of books before mentioned, with your note enclosed, by post. . . . His letter was as follows: 'I have seen the Minister of Foreign Relations, and he tells me that the chief of your partido will furnish the necessary pass for you to come here and visit me, as I am recalled, and will be very much pleased to see you before my departure from this country. Come as quick as possible, for I intend to leave on Saturday next.' I immediately put on my best clothes and started in flying colors, after ten months of sickness and imprisonment. . . . The next day I arrived at my destination, having travelled all night on an empty stomach, and wet to the skin, as the distance was twenty-four miles, and he leaving the very next day I could not wait



Admiral Davis having resolved on his plan of action, and being little more inclined to respect my opinions than he was those of General Webb, I could be of no further service by remaining longer in Buenos Aires; and as Mrs. Washburn

until the rain was over. On my arrival I went straight to his house, directed by a policeman. I met the General standing in his doorway. He received me very cordially, so far as words went. His first conversation was to express great regret on being recalled, and mentioned your name, saying that he believed you were the cause of it. His next remark to me was that the Legation in Asuncion had been sacked by the Brazilian soldiers, and that he wanted a list of the articles which were there belonging to me. I told him that a safe, which I lent you for the Legation, and a large red-cedar box, also four cushions belonging to my large coach, were the only property which belonged to me in the Legation. He then asked me if there was money in the box. I told him no; but that there were articles in it that were the same as money to me, as the box had a false bottom, underneath which was jewelry of the most expensive kind, studded with brilliants and diamonds, and in the upper part of the box there were books, clothes, and various other articles. . . . I told him I left the stars and stripes in my room, so that if there was a sack it could not be done innocently; also the fire-proof safe in the same contained my papers to show the amount which the jewelry cost me. . . . The amount total I paid was \$6,000 and some *pesos* (dollars), of which I cannot recollect the exact amount. . . . At this part of his questions and my answers, an officer walked right into the room where we were sitting, without any ceremony, and told the General that her Excellency was coming to visit him in a very short time. This knocked me out of time to see a Paraguayan soldier plunge headlong into an American Minister's house and apartments, as if he was all at home and quite accustomed to the room of the American Legation. I also was puzzled to know who her Excellency was, but in a very few minutes I was relieved of my suspense on seeing Madam Lynch's face approaching the Minister's door, and he running to do the amiable in ushering her into his house. On entering, she gave a distinct nod of her head to me. . . . McMahon turned to me and said, 'Duffield, excuse me a few minutes.' . . . On leaving the Legation, I met by accident some old friends of yours, who were the family of Requermes and Annabella Casal. They inquired after you very kindly, and invited me to go with them to have *maté* at their house, or *tolderia*, which was a few hides stuck on posts; and even that was more than a majority of the best families have. . . . After taking a few *matés*, I felt myself coming to life, as I was perfectly benumbed with cold and wet, and weak with hunger, which those good-hearted girls could see directly, though they were very little better themselves. Still they sympathized with me far more than the thoughtless, inconsiderate McMahon. . . . After whispering over a great many things in general, as you know well we could not talk very loud, they told me about a great many respectable families that had nearly all died off in that district of starvation and exposure. . . . Finally I thanked them for their *maté* and took my departure, leaving them all in sorrow. I directed my course back to the Legation, where I met the General alone and very pensive after his conversation with her Excellency.



had so far recovered from the reaction consequent on the terrible strain and anxiety of the last three months in Paraguay that her physician thought she might venture upon the sea, we started, on the 14th of November, to return to the United States.

He told me if I needed money he would cash the order which your note contained on Samuel B. Hale and Company, if I wished ; which proposition I agreed to, and he handed me the money on my indorsing the note. Having no more business to transact in the Legation, and McMahon offering me no consolation or prospect of being able to get out of this dreadful hell on earth, because, as he said, 'This was no time to embarrass Lopez with questions,' I left him a cold-water good-by and started immediately to change some pats\* and have a little to eat. Not finding any person that dared to offer more than ten reals for each pat, I was obliged to change four to pay for a little dish of puchero (stew) that did not half satisfy my hunger. I omitted to mention, that, on my departure from the Minister's quarters, I was surprised on seeing José Solís standing in the doorway of a room adjoining the Legation. As I passed, he saluted me, and appeared to be very much astonished that I was not dead yet. Before he got over his astonishment, I asked him if he occupied those rooms. He said that they were her Excellency La Madama's, and that he had just come to pack, or superintend the packing of a large quantity of boxes for the American Minister to take away.

"I will now finish this sorrowful account of suffering, hoping that neither you nor yours may ever experience the like. May God bless you and your family! If this letter reaches you, please publish a part or the whole of it, as you think proper, but first correct my bad orthography, and oblige

"Yours,

"JOHN A. DUFFIELD."

\* *Patacones*, silver dollars.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

Delay of Admiral Davis in going to the Rescue of Bliss and Masterman. — The Paraguayan Tribunal. — Examination of Mr. Bliss. — Specimen of his Testimony, as taken down by the Tribunal. — Torture. — Political Prisoners. — The Narrative of Mr. Masterman. — His Fellow-Prisoners, Dr. Carreras, Don Benigno Lopez, and others. — The *Cepo Uruguayana*. — Its Origin. — Mr. Taylor's Experience in it. — Other Victims. — Sufferings and Privations of the Prisoners. — The President's Sisters. — His Mother.

THE Admiral, having learned to his satisfaction that Bliss and Masterman were treated with "no unnecessary harshness," delayed his departure from Buenos Aires to go after them till the 23d of November, nearly two months after he first heard of their arrest. This delay would be regarded as no less than criminal by the people of the United States, should all the facts ever become known to them. It was necessary, in order to palliate the dilatory conduct of the Admiral, to manufacture evidence in Lopez's favor, and prove that he was not the cruel tyrant that I had represented him to be. Having thus taken measures to forestall public opinion at home, the squadron, consisting of four vessels, — the *Wasp*, the *Pawnee*, the *Quinnebaug*, and the *Kansas*, — started for Paraguay.

In the mean while it may be of interest to the reader to know what had become of Bliss and Masterman. Each of them has given to the public a full narrative of his treatment, to the general correctness of which numerous others have given corroborative testimony. In a previous chapter I have given an account of their torture and sufferings immediately after their arrest, while I was on board the *Wasp*, and Kirkland was holding that last interview with Lopez, in which he learned so much of his benevolent intentions, and



of his ardent desire to continue friendly relations with the United States.

Mr. Bliss, on being taken into the open square, found a large number of prisoners there confined. All of them were in the most squalid, starving condition. Among them he noticed a person who had a familiar look, but whom he was unable to recognize for a long time. His nose had been broken in, evidently by forcing his head against a musket, while undergoing the torture of the *cepo uruguayana*. He was heavily ironed, as were the other political prisoners, of whom there were some fifteen or twenty that Mr. Bliss recognized. There were also several priests in like manner loaded with heavy fetters. Of the large number of these prisoners who were to be his companions, he alone escaped death. A few days after the rescue of Bliss and Masterman, the great battle of Pikysry took place, which resulted so disastrously to the cause of Lopez. As was usual with him when anticipating an attack, he gave orders, that, in case the battle should go against him, the prisoners, with a few exceptions, should be killed. Of the political prisoners there were at least five hundred executed or tortured to death between the time when he devised his plan of conspiracy and his defeat at Pikysry. A very few of these political prisoners, at the time this battle commenced, had been so far set at liberty as to be released from their fetters; and in the battles which succeeded, some half-dozen of them had the good fortune to escape and to be taken prisoners by the Brazilians. But all the others, with two or three exceptions, were killed. During the first days of the prolonged combat they were kept in a place exposed to the shots of the enemy, and had the Wasp, which went to their rescue, not arrived before this battle took place, Bliss and Masterman would both of them have shared the fate of the other prisoners. Being in fetters, so that they could not run away, they could not have escaped at the same time with Truenfeld, Von Versen, and Taylor, who a few days before had been so far set at liberty as to have only a guard over them.



On being called before the tribunal, these two members of the United States Legation were driven, with their fetters still on them, from where they had dismounted, being beaten over the head and shoulders at almost every step by the soldiers having them in charge. The tribunal consisted of six men, all in uniform, and apparently officers, though two of them were priests. One of these proved to be the "terrible Padre Maiz." The tribunal began its examination of Bliss by asking him why he had been arrested, and continued as follows : —

"‘You ought to understand that when we have brought you before *this* tribunal your guilt is an ascertained fact. You are not brought here to make any defence of yourself. You are brought here simply for the purpose of clearing up by your own confession and your own depositions the facts in the case connected with your complicity in the conspiracy. As to your guilt, we know that already, and we shall not allow you to endeavor to dodge the point.’ I was then asked again if I would confess myself to be guilty. I replied that I would not, ‘that I had always been, during my entire residence in Paraguay, perfectly loyal to the government, had never taken any step which could justly be complained of by the government; that so far as relates to the quarrel between Paraguay and Brazil concerning the question of boundaries and of the balance of power in South America I had sympathized with Paraguay, and had done what I could to sustain the Paraguayan cause in that aspect of the case; that, as to the accusation of *conspiracy*, it was absolutely false, no matter who might have testified to the charge.’ This was all recorded as my protestation of innocence. I was then asked if I knew Dr. Carreras, and if I knew Mr. Rodriguez, and then each one of five or six others who were charged as being principal persons in the conspiracy, and who, as I afterwards learned, were named as members of the *committee* to which I was accused of having belonged, and which included two of the members of Lopez’s Cabinet, his own brother, Benigno, and two or three foreign gentlemen who had resided in the country. I was asked if I knew these persons. I replied in each case in the affirmative, stating exactly how far I had known each of these gentlemen. I was then interrogated the second time how it was possible, — I having stated



that I was well acquainted with each of these individuals, and they having confessed that they were members of the conspiracy in which I was deeply involved, holding an important post therein,—for me to have the audacity to maintain my innocence. I replied that ‘I knew nothing about any such committee or any such conspiracy; that other people might say what they liked, but I would speak the truth. That as I had been sworn, on my entrance to the tribunal, to speak the truth, in accordance with the terms of my oath I was resolved to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth.’

“After that, the two priests, as members of the tribunal, appealed to me again, saying that it was entirely useless for me to maintain my innocence. ‘It was well known I had been led away by Mr. Washburn, who was the genius of evil for the Paraguayan nation.’ It was intimated to me, by insinuation, that, by developing all I knew about Mr. Washburn’s machinations as connected with the conspiracy, I might lighten my own sufferings and the guilt which they considered as attaching to me in the case. They said to me that they knew I had a most wonderful *memory*; that I was perfectly acquainted with all that had taken place in the matter from first to last; that I had conducted the correspondence in a great measure, and they expected from me a full and detailed statement of all the facts and circumstances, saying that by so doing I might render a service to the government which might go very far to mitigate my own position. They desired me, therefore, to state ‘all the facts in regard to the manœuvres of this wretch Washburn, who had just got away from the country by the skin of his teeth.’ They expressed themselves very bitterly against Mr. Washburn, who had been charged by the prisoners previously tortured and forced to confess with being at the head of the conspiracy. The plan of proceeding was simply this: These prisoners were obliged to invent some story, and were desirous of attaching as much blame as they could to parties whom they knew to be beyond the reach of the Paraguayan government; it being their plan to protect as far as possible the innocent prisoners who were then within the clutches of Lopez.

“ . . . . After a good deal of reflection, extending amid these altercations through several hours, and having undergone fearful physical suffering (I was not *then* put to what was ordinarily called torture; but the treatment I had suffered was actually *greater* torture to me than that I endured on any other occasion); having



been taken to that tribunal and kept for twelve mortal hours without any food, and this after having been denied food for twenty-four hours previously, with my manacles on me, which had become painful beyond endurance, eating into the flesh, what I suffered was to me torture beyond anything I afterwards endured, although not *technically* called torture. I say that, having endured all this, and after reflection, I finally came to the conclusion that I would confess in a general way, and throw the blame of everything on Mr. Washburn; that I would not implicate any one within the reach of Lopez, but that I would spin out my statement as long as possible, for the purpose of gaining time, until I was sure Mr. Washburn had left the country, and was out of harm's way; that I would go into great detail about Mr. Washburn's previous antecedents, thus *talking against time*, and see if it were not possible, by throwing everything upon *him*, to palliate the charges against myself and the other victims who had been forced to make similar confessions. I therefore commenced my statements, going back to the first arrival of Mr. Washburn in the country, seven years before. I spun a long story about the influences under which Mr. Washburn had been appointed. . . .

"On the fourth day I was told that my statements about Mr. Washburn were all very well so far as they went, but that I had been prevaricating; that I had not confessed the full extent of my own complicity with what was called the *revolution* (that was the cant name for the supposed conspiracy). I had not confessed my own very great complicity, and the very important part I had taken. I was interrogated by the person who acted as chief torturer, an officer named Major Aveiro, and who was brought into requisition whenever the services of any person were needed for that purpose. The plan of the conspiracy, as this tribunal had it, was that eleven individuals, constituting a committee, at such a place and such a time, had put their names to a certain paper, which I had drawn up as secretary, in which they had agreed to assassinate Marshal Lopez and organize a new government in Paraguay. This was the first intimation I had of such a committee. I knew before that I was accused of having put my name to some such paper, but who were the *other* persons who had signed along with me I had no idea, and the demand made by the tribunal for the details of this transaction took me by surprise. I replied that I knew nothing about it; that I had not seen such a paper. The Major said it was useless to



deny it; that he knew I had been secretary of the committee, and drawn up the paper myself, and then said I would be confronted by all the other members of the committee, that they had all confessed *their* complicity and accused *me*, and that I would have to confess mine. I again replied that I knew nothing about it. During the rest of that day I continued to hold out in my denial of any knowledge of this committee. This was the fourth day. At nightfall, after having been taken back to the encampment where I was kept, I was brought up again along with Dr. Carreras, the Portuguese Consul, and an Italian captain (Fidanza), who had been a friend of mine, also a prisoner, all three of whom were accused of having been members of that committee to which I was supposed to have belonged. We were brought up in single file. I was taken in and asked if I still persisted in denying my signature to that document. I replied: 'I do deny it, and I will continue to deny it.' 'O,' said a priest, 'we will bring in witnesses'; and they did bring in the Italian captain, who, being confronted with me, was asked if it was true that I had signed that paper. This man, having of course been previously tortured and forced to confess, said I was one of the eleven who had signed it. I still stood out, and said that I had not. He was then told to expostulate with me, and he said to me substantially: 'You know, Bliss, you signed this paper. Why do you attempt to deny it? All of us will testify to the same fact. You know very well that you did. Let me bring the circumstances to your mind. Don't you remember that on a certain evening we met together, — eleven of us; that Manlove was to have been there, but did not appear? Don't you remember that you arrived last, after we were all assembled?' Said I: 'Who were the individuals that signed the paper, and in what order did they sign?' He then mentioned the names in order, commencing with Benigno Lopez, the brother of the President; then Berges, the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs; then Bedoya, a brother-in-law of Lopez; then Dr. Carreras, the Uruguayan Prime Minister, and Rodriguez the former *Chargé d'Affaires* of Uruguay, both of whom had been lately living with us at the American Legation; then the Portuguese Consul and Vice-Consul, the former of whom had also been arrested from the American Legation; then the Italian captain, who was a witness against himself; then two Frenchmen, one being chancellor of the French



consulate, and lastly myself. I paid great attention to this detail, as it gave me the first clew to the individuals with whom I was expected to confess myself to have acted on that committee ; and it was for that purpose that I requested him to give the *order of names* in which we had signed. Having a good memory, I was enabled to keep it in my mind for the purpose of making use of it whenever I should come to the point of continuing my confession into this branch of the conspiracy.

"This captain was then taken away and Dr. Carreras brought in. He was asked, 'Is it true that Bliss was one of the eleven who signed that document with you?' He replied that it was, and the question was then asked of me, 'What do you say to that?' I replied, 'It is false.' Dr. Carreras said to me in a low tone, 'It is useless to deny it.'

"Dr. Carreras was then taken away and the Portuguese Consul brought in, being the third witness, who was asked simply, 'Do you know the prisoner before you?' His answer was, 'Yes.' 'Was he one of the eleven who signed with you?' 'Yes.' I had also ascertained that I would be charged with having received an amount of money for my services ; in fact, that had been stated to me before by the torturer. And I wished to ascertain what had been deposed against me. I therefore asked permission to cross-examine this witness, to which they assented. I then said to the Portuguese Consul : 'You have testified to my having signed that paper ; I suppose you have also said that I received money for it?' 'Yes,' he said. 'How much money do you pretend to charge me with having received?'

"The officers of the tribunal, breaking in then, refused to allow the question to be answered, and the Portuguese Consul was hustled away. Then turning to me they said : 'Three witnesses, you see, have testified against you. You know that two witnesses constitute legal proof. We have been very indulgent towards you, while you have been making a fool of us for the last three or four days. You have made statements upon certain points, but you have not confessed the most important point up to the present time. We were under no obligation to bring these witnesses, because our own word is sufficient. All the other members of that committee have confessed in like manner. Will you now confess your part of the plan?' I replied : 'No ; because of the oath I have taken. I



admit that three witnesses constitute legal proof, and yet they cannot make a falsehood true. And I can mention circumstances which would somewhat lessen the worth of their testimony.' 'What circumstances do you allude to?' Said I, 'I allude to physical torture.' There was an exchange of glances on the part of the members of the tribunal; when one of them remarked, 'You are talking very *metaphysically* with us.' 'But we will treat you in a very *physical* manner. Call in the Major,' he said, referring to the officer acting as chief torturer. Major Aveiro then came in. He repeated the question, 'Do you confess having signed that paper?' I replied, 'No.' He said, 'You are trying to make a fool of me. I shall not fool with you.' Whereupon he commenced buffeting me in the face with his fists. I stood there in my irons while he continued striking me with the full weight of his fist in the face, at every blow asking me, 'Do you confess? Do you confess? Do you confess?' And I answered him, 'No.' When he got tired of that, he drew his sword and commenced beating me over the head in like manner, each blow bringing the blood, and asking me, 'Do you confess?' I replied in like manner, 'I do not,' until, believing I had done enough to save my conscience, and that I should not gain anything by enduring this suffering any longer, I replied, 'Yes.' 'Then dictate to us the document you signed on that occasion, as we know you were secretary of that organization,—the document in which you promised to assassinate Marshal Lopez and to take upon yourselves the direction of the revolutionary movement.' Thrown upon my wits in that manner, I did dictate in a slow manner the document which is published in one of these congressional papers, in which I gave the text of a paper agreeing to assassinate Marshal Lopez, provided the means were not found of overthrowing him otherwise, and giving each to the other our word of honor not to reveal what had been agreed upon. . . .

"I had been twice obliged by the pressure of events to confess what was not true, as I had been confessing all along; but I thought I would again make a stand, that I would not confess anything further now, that, if obliged to do it, I would stand the torture as long as I could. I had had eight or ten days of enforced idleness in which to think about it, and came to the conclusion that I would say nothing more, unless I was obliged to by pressure beyond my ability to endure. So then I refused to confess anything further, and



the torture was put in execution. I was seated on the ground, two muskets were placed under my knees and two muskets over my neck, my wrists were tied together behind my back and pulled up by the guard : the muskets above and below were connected with thongs fastened around them so as to be readily tightened ; in some instances they were violently tightened by pounding with a mallet. They continued to tighten them, bringing my body in such a position that my abdomen suffered great compression, and that I distinctly heard the cracking of the vertebræ of the spine, leaving me in that posture for a long time. In fact, after I was on board the United States squadron I could never stoop forward without feeling a twinge in the back and in the abdomen. I remained in that position about fifteen minutes, the officers standing over me, watching the effects of their cruel work. At the end of that time I was prepared with a new batch of novelties of the most startling character. The priests came and stood over me, cross-questioning me, and extracted from me a general confession as to the heads of what they had inquired about before they released me. After I had confessed in general, I was taken in that condition before the tribunal, who set to work to elucidate the minutiae of my new confession." \*

\* This testimony of Mr. Bliss as taken down by the tribunal and forwarded to the United States as evidence against their late Minister extends through twenty-five octavo pages, of which the following is given as a specimen : —

"He" (Washburn) "also said of the patriotic speeches that appeared in the *Semanario*, that they were got up for the occasion by professional orators, and did not express the sentiments of the people. Dr. Roca, for instance, had written more than five hundred speeches for such occasions, and they were all just as like as coins from the same mould, and the same soup was served every Saturday from the *Semanario*, namely, praise of Lopez. Its columns were devoted to the praise of the government, and nothing could be discussed if not in laudation of Lopez.

"In fact, Washburn ridiculed the government to all his correspondents.

"On the 15th the evidence was as follows : Deponent confesses having signed a document with ten others, at Berges's house at Salinares, to concert with the commanders of the allied armies to bring about a revolution against the national government. He acted as secretary to the meeting, and drew up the secret pact sworn to by the conspirators present to take Lopez's life. The persons that assisted him in drawing up this document were José Berges, Benigno Lopez, and Antonio Carreras. The document was engrossed in a fine, clerkly hand, and, to the best of his recollection, was as follows : —

"We, the undersigned, citizens of the Republic of Paraguay, and strangers residing therein, having good reasons for desiring a prompt termination of this



When Bliss and Masterman were first brought before the tribunal and questioned in regard to their knowledge of the "conspiracy," they said it was limited to what they had learned, while in the Legation, from Benitez's letters ; and after having been put to the torture till they could endure it no longer and promised to confess, their greatest difficulty was to learn what sort of confession would save them from further suffering. This they could only guess at from the nature of the questions put to them. They were as ready to confess one thing as another, and when Bliss was commanded to give the names of his fellow-signers of the "secret pact" of assassination, all of whom but himself, he was told, had already confessed, he could say nothing, as he might, if he gave names, inculcate persons who were still in favor, and thus cause their destruction. So he positively denied all knowledge of any such pact till three of the other signers were brought forward to confront him. With their aid, and the blows administered lustily by Aveiro, Bliss's memory was so

long and bloody war that is ruining the country and destroying the male inhabitants, and believing it necessary to select competent persons to bring about a radical change in the system of government by putting out of the way the only obstacle to the accomplishment of this, and having the consent of the allied enemy, we bind ourselves mutually to work together to effect a change of government and choose a new chief-magistrate ; and if it is found necessary to resort to violence to rid ourselves of the President of the Republic, we also obligate ourselves to do so, after trying other means to effect the same end. We swear by our word of honor upon the holy Evangels to aid each other in whatever is agreed on by the majority of the signers to realize the design already expressed, and to keep the secret of this conspiracy upon the pain of death. In faith whereof we have signed this pact in each other's presence. Dated at Salinares, November, 1867 (about the middle of the month, he thinks). Signed by Benigno Lopez, José Berges, Saturnino Bedoya, Antonio Carreras, Francisco Rodriguez Larreta, José Maria Leite Pereira, Antonio Vasconcellos, Simone Fidanza, M. Libertat, Domingo Pomié, Porter Cornelius Bliss."

"Manlove did not come in time to sign."

"After the signing of the above document, another was drawn up as a constitution for the country, after the first project was executed. It was signed early in December by Carreras, Rodriguez, and deponent, at the house of Benigno Lopez, at Asuncion. Conferences were held at the house of Carreras in Trinidad, at Berges's office, and several other places, before it was finally adopted. . . .

"For his services in the conspiracy, deponent got five thousand patacones from



quickened that he was able to testify as desired, and afterwards as he could judge to some extent from the questions put to him what answers were required, he for a while could confess quite satisfactorily.

The narrative of Mr. Masterman gives an equally vivid description of the miseries to which he and Bliss, and indeed all those prisoners accused of political offences, were subjected, none of whom, however, as the Secretary of State was advised by General McMahon, "were treated with unnecessary harshness." A few days after their arrival near headquarters, an order was given for the prisoners to be removed to a place some leagues distant, called Pikysyry. Says Masterman : —

"We were turned out into the sun, and had to wait for some time, for we were at the head of the sad procession and the hundreds of prisoners. The lines of the guard and men carrying the cooking-pots and troughs were marshalled with difficulty, blows and curses being showered mercilessly on the sick and loiterers.

Benigno Lopez, at one time, and on three other occasions five thousand five hundred dollars in paper money, which he thought came out of Lopez's private property, but found it came from the national treasury, which was the banking-house for the conspiracy. Deponent learned this from Washburn, who had received large sums of money on account from the same source. This was found out after the evacuation of the city. Washburn also told him that Carreras and Rodriguez had received money for their co-operation in the contemplated conspiracy.

"All the money received by deponent (except eight hundred dollars, his expenses up to the time of his imprisonment) was deposited with Washburn, to be taken to Buenos Aires and deposited in Maua's bank there, subject to deponent's order.

"Washburn acknowledged to deponent that he had received large sums of money from Benigno Lopez, to pay the conspirators. Deponent saw two women carrying the money in covered baskets on their heads to the Legation more than once. All this money, with much more belonging to Carreras, Rodriguez, and others, was carried away by Washburn to be deposited for the owners in Buenos Aires."

"On the 16th the testimony given was this : —

"Deponent heard of the surrender of Humaita from Washburn, who had a letter from Caxias, dated the 10th of June, informing him that the surrender was agreed upon for the last of July with the chief officers, Francisco Martinez, and Remigio Cabral, called Admiral of the Paraguayan Navy. Deponent thinks a letter came at the same time from Caxias to José Berges, announcing the same event."



"From one of the hovels near me crept out, on all-fours, Don Benigno Lopez, the President's youngest brother; he was well dressed, but heavily ironed; and from another, a spectral old man I was long in recognizing as the ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Don José Berges. He was leaning feebly on a hedge-stake, and was followed by his successor, Don Gumesindo Benitez, bareheaded and with naked fettered feet. Then two very old men, evidently in their second childhood; they were without a rag to cover them. One was in irons, and could only crawl tremblingly on his hands and knees; the other looked round with a timid smile on his silly face, pleased with the bustle around him, and evidently but faintly conscious of what was going on. . . . And what would their offence be? A wailing complaint for the loss of their few comforts, a passionate lament for the death of their sons or grandchildren; an idle word spoken in garrulous old age, and construed into treason, or perhaps simply the fact of their relationship to some poor wretch who had died in the rack or on the scaffold."

"At length we set off in an easterly direction, skirting the base of the hills, through a narrow defile, and then into a pathless wood. In the former we got into some confusion; the prisoners were huddled together and separated a little from the soldiers who, with fixed bayonets or drawn swords, were guarding them. It was an opportunity I had long been waiting for; for some minutes I was at the side of Dr. Carreras; he asked me again, in an eager whisper, if Mr. Washburn had gone. 'Yes, he is safe,' I replied in the same cautious tone, and then went on to ask him if there were any truth in his depositions. '*No, no, — lies, all lies, from beginning to end!*' 'Why did you tell them?' I asked somewhat unnecessarily. 'That terrible Father Maiz,' said he, 'tortured me in the *uruguayana* on three successive days, and then smashed my fingers with a mallet.' He looked at me with an expression of utter wretchedness on his worn face, and held out his maimed hands as a testimony. Then, after a pause, he asked me, 'Have you confessed?' 'Yes,' I answered sadly. 'You have done well, — they would have compelled you to do so: God help us!' I told him about a difficulty I had had in not being able to say how much money Mr. Washburn was said to have received from the Brazilians, although the sum had been mentioned several times in the 'depositions,' and asked how much I should say. 'Fifteen thousand ounces, I told him,' he replied; '*lies, false, false!*' . . . .



"The two old men, being found too feeble to walk, were each put in a hide, and carried with a pole by two soldiers ; they were tumbled out on the ground when they halted, close to me, yet thanked their bearers with, ' God' reward you, my sons ! God reward you ! ' But the next day they were denied this favor, and were thrashed most horribly by the corporals to make them go faster ; it was heart-rending to hear them, in weak treble tones, praying for mercy, and to see them arrive an hour after the rest, covered with dust and blood ; they had crawled on their hands and knees nearly a mile. Several women were brought in that day, strangers to me, but evidently belonging to the better class of natives ; two or three had the little huts I have mentioned, others had formed a screen of a shawl or two strained over a few sticks ; and I saw one poor girl, about sixteen years of age, crouched under a hide propped against her shoulders ; she never moved save to turn as the sun wested, and sat with her eyes bent to the earth, and tears often stealing silently down her cheeks. . . . "

"I remained there four days, and one afternoon, as I was viewing the shocking spectacle of a prisoner being tortured in our midst, a guard came and took Mr. Bliss and myself away with them. I fully expected to be shot, but it was to rejoin our late companions. They were located in a rocky cleft in the hills far from the others. I found there Leite Pereira, Captain Fidanza, Berges, Don Benigno and Don Venancio Lopez, — the latter a colonel and the President's eldest brother, — Benitez, and Carreras, each in a hovel apart. . . . "

"On the 23d of September, Don Benigno Lopez was put to the torture ; he had been taken away early in the morning, and did not return till long after noon ; he shuffled slowly into his hut, which nearly faced mine, and shortly afterwards an officer, with three men carrying the well-remembered bundle of muskets and cords, came up. I became sick with anxiety, Don Benigno turned pale, and rose tremblingly as they came near him, — thinking, probably, of his brother-in-law, Don Saturnino Bedoya, who died under its infliction some months before, — and followed them, at a signal from the officer, behind a copse of trees near at hand. About an hour passed away ; several officers, including Major Aveiro, went to see him ; and at length he was led back, unable to stand, and with his face frightfully distorted by the agony he had suffered."

The torture known as *cepo uruguayana* is said to have been



first used in Bolivia in the time of Bolivar. Its efficiency as a means of extorting confession is believed to be unequalled by any means ever invented by pitiless man. It was never resorted to in Paraguay previous to the time of the second Lopez ; and how he learned of its terrible capacity for creating pain is not known. It was formerly called the *cepo boliviano* ; but the surrender of Estigarribia at Uruguayana so greatly enraged Lopez, and those who offended him were so frequently subjected to this terrible punishment, as to cause it to be considered as in some way connected with that disastrous campaign. At least it was called, after that, the *cepo uruguayana*.

Mr. Alonzo Taylor, an Englishman, who had lived about ten years in Paraguay, and was in the employ of the government as master-builder or mason of the more important public buildings, and of the new palace of Lopez, thus describes his experience of the *cepo uruguayana* : —

“The torture is as follows, and this is how I suffered it : I sat on the ground with my knees up ; my legs were first tied tightly together, and then my hands behind me with the palms outward. A musket was then fastened under my knees ; six more of them, tied together in a bundle, were then put on my shoulders, and they were looped together with hide ropes at one end ; they then made a running loop on the other side from the lower musket to the other, and two soldiers hauling on the end of it forced my face down to my knees and secured it so.

“The effect was as follows : First the feet went to sleep, then a tingling commenced in the toes, gradually extending to the knees, and the same in the hands and arms, and increased until the agony was unbearable. My tongue swelled up, and I thought that my jaws would have been displaced ; I lost all feeling in one side of my face for a fortnight afterwards. The suffering was dreadful ; I should certainly have confessed if I had had anything to confess, and I have no doubt many would acknowledge or invent anything to escape bearing the horrible agony of this torment. I remained two hours as I have described, and I considered myself fortunate in escaping then ; for many were put in the *uruguayana* twice, and others six times, and with eight muskets on the nape of the neck.



"Señora Martinez was tortured six times in this horrible way, besides being flogged and beaten with sticks until she had not an inch of skin free from wounds.

"At the expiration of two hours I was released; Serrano came to me, and asked if I would now acknowledge who was to be the new President. I was unable to speak; and he went on to say that I had only been kept in the *cepo* a short time, owing to the clemency of his Excellency Marshal Lopez, and that, if I did not then divulge it, I should have three sets of irons put upon me, eight muskets in place of six, and be kept in much longer. I was so utterly exhausted, and so faint, that at the time his threats made no impression on me. Afterward I was taken back to the guardia, and as a great favor I was not tied down that night."

Mr. Taylor could not tell why it was that he was so barbarously treated. But that was the case with all. According to his own account, his treatment was humane as compared with what he saw inflicted on many others. It is incredible that any being having the human form could inflict, from mere delight in causing pain, such cruelties as he describes. He says:—

"I saw an Argentine officer taken away one day, and when he returned the whole of his body was raw. The next morning, when we were loosened, I pointed to his back, but did not speak; he let his head fall on his breast, and with a stick wrote in the sand 'one hundred.' From that I gathered he had received a hundred lashes with a cow-hide, or else with one of the creeping plants (I think they call them lianas) which grew in plenty on the trees around us. That afternoon he was sent for again, and when he came back he wrote 'two hundred.' The next day he was shot.

"The prisoners were of all nationalities and of all grades and positions, but with the heat, wear and tear, the rain and wind, they were soon all alike, nearly naked. And our guards used to offer us pieces of bread or a few spikes of maize for our clothes, and, suffering from hunger as we did, we were glad to purchase a day's life at the price of a coat or a shirt. Amongst them were many women, some of them belonging to the best families in the country; some quite old and gray-headed, others young and pretty,—especially Dolores Recaldè, a very tall and beautiful girl, and Josefa



Requelmè, a handsome woman, with very fine eyes. They suffered much, poor creatures, though they had little A-shaped straw huts to shelter them, as did some few of the other prisoners of the highest class, and used to weep piteously over their miserable fate. . . .

"For my part, I do not believe that there was any conspiracy at all, unless on the part of the President himself and some of his tools to rob foreigners of their money. . . .

"It is useless to attempt to describe the miseries of our daily life in San Fernando, — one unvarying round of privations, fresh prisoners, punishments, and executions. Not a day passed but some of us were taken out to be beaten, tortured, or shot. The cries of those being flogged were heart-rending. Two Orientales I saw flogged to death; and when young Capdevila was shot, he was black and blue from head to foot from the blows inflicted on him.

"There were several ladies among the prisoners; they were flogged in the huts, but we could hear their cries. . . .

"On the 21st of December we were released from the stocks, as usual, at 6.30, but at once tied down again, because the Brazilians had got our range, and shell were flying over and close to us, and the Paraguayans hoped to see us thus got rid of. But I felt no fear, and was quite resigned; for the shocking misery I had suffered for five months had blunted — indeed, nearly obliterated — all feelings, moral and physical."

While yet a prisoner, but after he had been relieved of his fetters, Taylor was so fortunate as to be taken prisoner by the Brazilians. Of his condition when taken he thus speaks: —

"I was a miserable object, reduced to a skeleton, and enfeebled to the last degree. When I was at Luque, I weighed one hundred and seventy-eight pounds; and when I went on board the gunboat Cracker, only ninety-eight pounds.

"After recruiting my strength for four days at Lomas, I left on horseback for Asuncion. I suffered terribly on the road; for I had scarcely any flesh on my bones, and had not strength enough to keep myself in the saddle.

"There I arrived at last, but so ill that I could not speak for some days. . . .

"I am daily getting stronger and gaining flesh, but I look like a



man just recovering from yellow fever ; and as I dictate this to Mr. Shaw, my memory sometimes seems to leave me, I cannot fix my attention ; but I hope I shall soon recover my health, both of mind and body."

Of all those fearful scenes and trials to which the prisoners were subjected, Lopez's two sisters, Inocencia and Rafaela, were witnesses and participators. The only distinction shown them was that they were not forced to make the first part of the journey, after leaving Pikysyry, on foot. Each of them was kept closely shut up in a cart, similar to those which are commonly made use of for wild beasts that are carried about for exhibition. From these they were never taken out, while at Pikysyry, except to be carried before the tribunal, to be there treated like other accused persons. It was not till a later period that the mother of Lopez was arrested, tortured, and condemned to death.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

The Depositions of Bliss and Masterman. — Contradictions. — A Conspiracy to overthrow Republicanism in South America. — Lopez's Mode of eliciting the Truth. — Measures adopted by Bliss and Masterman to gain Time. — Bliss becomes my Biographer. — Youthful Infirmities. — Kleptomania. — College Life. — Favorite Books. — Experience as a Lawyer, Doctor, and in other Capacities. — Removal to California. — Novelist, Editor, Poet. — Appointed Minister to Paraguay. — Magnanimity of Lopez. — My Ingratitude. — The Paid Agent of the Brazilians. — Pretended Extracts from my Forthcoming Book. — Parallel between Lopez and Rehoboam. — My Opinion of Lopez and the Principal Characters among the Allies. — Character of the Book. — Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver outdone. — Circumstances under which it was written. — Remarkable Memory of the Author. — His Style. — He endeavors to excite the Superstitious Fears of Lopez. — The Letter "B." — Previous Relations with Mr. Bliss. — Want of Taste and Delicacy shown in the Book. — Extenuating Circumstances. — The Writer accomplishes his Object. — Indignation of the Naval Officers.

THE depositions of Bliss and Masterman are such a strange medley of contradictions as to render the Paraguayan mystery more dark and incomprehensible than ever. In them a great number of persons are charged with being engaged in the conspiracy who were out of the reach of Lopez, and would certainly deny all knowledge of or participation in any such plot. It would seem, therefore, from his sending these depositions abroad, that he believed them, and that they would be taken as evidence, by our government, to convict me of wrongful practices while in office. According to these declarations before the "solemn tribunal," it would appear that correspondence passed through my hands between the conspirators in Paraguay and their colleagues on the other side of the lines as freely and safely as if there had been a daily mail. The number of letters that passed between me and Caxias was astonishing, considering the fact that we were



two hundred miles apart, and that for more than fifty years no person not authorized by the government had ever been able to traverse the space between us. It was also singular that none of this treasonable correspondence was ever discovered and published; and more singular, that the only evidence of it that exists is the testimony of tortured witnesses.

The Marques de Caxias, when he first learned of the frequent and protracted correspondence that he had been carrying on with me, wrote a letter to his government denying the accusation, asserting that he had always freely advised the Ministry of War of all he had done, and that his official reports would show that the allegations contained in the declarations made before Lopez's tribunal were utterly without foundation. He said that when he first took the command of the allied army he would have had no hesitation in assisting the Paraguayans to make a revolution against the tyrant; but he soon learned, that, under such a system of espionage as was maintained by Lopez, it would be utterly impossible for dissatisfied persons to have any concert of action, and had never thought of such a thing as a revolution afterwards, till he read in Benitez's letters that he had been engaged for a year and a half in promoting one.

Caxias, however, according to the testimony of the witnesses before the "solemn tribunal," was only acting a subordinate part in the great scheme I had devised for changing the map of South America. The principals with whom I was intriguing were Napoleon III. and Pedro II. These two mighty potentates had vast designs of territorial aggrandizement, and in arranging the details they both appealed to me as arbiter or umpire. Brazil, however, had got the start by appointing me Minister Plenipotentiary, with a salary of forty-eight thousand dollars a year, besides occasionally sending me, in the way of extras, such trifles as twenty thousand gold ounces. I did not, however, consent to the establishing of new empires in South America in order to give thrones to the scions of the imperial houses of Bonaparte and Braganza, though



I had an Emperor on each hand imploring me to do so. I persistently adhered to the Monroe doctrine, and told Don Pedro, that, while he might annex all the adjoining territory he could get possession of, I should not permit him to erect another throne on the American continent.\* Certainly I had never supposed, when first appointed as Minister to the little republic of Paraguay, that I was to figure in such company. But, as Shakespeare says, "some men have greatness thrust upon them."

The other conspirators, it seems, had no knowledge of the full extent of my relations with the crowned heads, and it was

\* "On the 4th of November the deposition was as follows : — Washburn told deponent that at the time of his arrival at Rio Janeiro, in 1865, the leaders of the imperial government there made no secret of their intentions, in case of success in the war against Paraguay. He said Paranhos, Saraiva, Octaviano, Zacarias, and even the Emperor, confessed the intention to annex all the territory on the left banks of the Plata, Parana, and Paraguay Rivers to Brazil.

"Washburn believes another war will break out, after the conclusion of the present one, between the Argentine Republic and Brazil, about the division of spoils ; and he expressed as much in his note to Caxias, in reply to the one mentioning the secret treaty.

"The Emperor Napoleon III. has a mortgage on that vast region of Brazil north of the Amazon, and has done all he could to get a prince of his house on a throne of South America. His original idea was to extend his colony of Cayenne by annexing to it British and Dutch Guiana, to be acquired by purchase, and then add the Brazilian territory mentioned, so as to form an empire or kingdom almost as large as Mexico. In case Brazil chose to pay off the mortgage, he proposed to erect a kingdom on the Plata, containing all the territory east of the Plata, Paraguay, and Parana Rivers, or composed of Paraguay, Mato Grosso, and Eastern Bolivia ; and, as inducement, he proposed to marry the new monarch to a princess of the house of Braganza.

"This proposition did not meet with much favor in Brazil, because the nobility there preferred annexing the conquered territory to Brazil ; or, in case of a new empire, they wanted one of their own princes or princesses to occupy the throne, — proposing the Count d'Eu, or the Duke of Sax, with his wife, the second daughter of the house of Brazil.

"In his conferences with the statesmen above mentioned, Washburn rejected the French proposition, on account of the Monroe doctrine professed by the North American government, — not to permit the erection of any throne on the American continent, or at least no throne for a European prince. For the same reason he opposed the founding of a throne for a prince of Brazil, because Napoleon would not allow any of the Bourbon family on a new throne in Europe." — *Deposition of Porter Cornelius Bliss before the Paraguayan Tribunal*, Executive Doc. 5, Part 3, pp. 31, 32.



not till Mr. Bliss had been many times before the tribunal, and testified satisfactorily on all points on which the others had confessed before him, that Lopez was made aware of the grand combination against him. Having obtained all this, Lopez then thought he would try the effect of the *cepo uruguayana*, to which Bliss had not yet been subjected. He was therefore told by the inquisitors that he was keeping back important information, and they knew it. Having endured the torture as long as he could bear it, he promised to confess everything, and was then released. His further confessions are thus related by himself:—

“I thought I would try the experiment of frightening Lopez by representing that the whole world was engaged in a combination against him. I stated to that tribunal, that the alliance of Brazil, the Argentine government, and Uruguay had been dissolved and replaced by a new secret treaty of double alliance on the part of Brazil and the Argentine Republic, by which the Republic of Uruguay was to be sacrificed along with Paraguay, and both of them fall a prey to the larger powers, and to be divided up like Poland. I went into geographical details, stating what were to be the boundaries of each one of these countries, and to give the terms of the treaty, which I had called the *double alliance* between Brazil and the Argentine Republic; stating that England, France, and Spain, through their diplomatic agents, had all been lending their countenance to the allies, that they were all in sympathy with the conspiracy going on against Paraguay, that it had been resolved to take possession of the Paraguayan army after the conquest of the country, and engage it with the Brazilian army in fighting against Bolivia, Peru, and other adjacent countries. In that way I endeavored to confuse Lopez, who believed every word of these statements, and to convince him that he was in a most desperate strait. The evidence that he believed it may be found in the fact that after this he issued a proclamation to his army on the 16th of October, the Paraguayan 4th of July, in which he repeated the statement made in my last declarations as to a general combination of most of the civilized nations against them, and made a last appeal to their patriotism.”

It was certainly a hazardous venture to make up such



a stupendous story in regard to matters that if true could not escape public notoriety, and which would be proved entirely fictitious were any neutral gunboat to arrive bringing files of newspapers. If the trick were discovered, the perpetrator might count on a renewal of the *cepo*, to be prolonged till the body could no longer endure it, when he would be handed over to the executioner.

The official declarations having been completed, Bliss and Masterman then supposed they would be despatched. But a new lease of life was given them, that they might write out in narrative form the substance of their testimony. They were both furnished with writing-materials, and their straw huts so raised that they could sit upon the ground. A box was placed before each of them, to serve as a writing-table, and then they were told to commence. They had their fetters on all the time, and a sentinel was always at hand to prod them on and to keep them to their work. They had both learned by this time, that their work, to profit themselves, must abound with abuse of me and in praise of Lopez. Masterman's work was not published, or, if so, was not sent abroad. It was made up almost entirely of praises of Lopez and abuse of me; but as it threw little light on my political offences, it was probably suppressed for that reason.\*

The work of Mr. Bliss, written under such circumstances, while in taste it was little better than Masterman's, — in fact, nearly as bad as could be, — so completely effected the writer's object that it may be regarded as the greatest literary success of modern times. It undoubtedly saved the writer's life and that of his companion, Masterman. On being arrested, they both felt that their only hope of ever leaving Paraguay depended on my success in bringing a gunboat or a squadron to their rescue. They had little doubt, that, if they were not killed within three or four months, a force of some kind would

\* "In order to conceal my real object, the whole was interspersed with abuse and ridicule of *el gran bestia* and his friends the *macacos* and *camdàs* (the 'baboons' and 'niggers' of Brazil), and laudation so fulsome of Lopez, that he would indeed be a blind man who did not see through it directly." — MASTERMAN'S *Seven Eventful Years*, p. 301.



be sent for them ; and as they had learned that Godon was no longer in command of the squadron, and knew nothing of the character of Davis, they hoped that within a few weeks the American flag would be seen again in the river. It was everything, therefore, for them to gain time ; and when Bliss was commanded to write a connected account of those events to which he had testified as a witness, he saw that the more extensive the scale on which he projected his work the better were his chances of escape. The torturers had taught him that the more extravagant the denunciations of the "evil genius of Paraguay," or the "Great Beast," as the inquisitors were accustomed to call me, the more acceptable were his "declarations" to their master. He, therefore, as he testified before the committee of Congress, resolved to make his narrative serve a double purpose ; his work should be gross and startling enough to make Lopez desirous of its continuance, and at the same time so absurd and ridiculous that it would defeat the very object which the tyrant had in view in ordering it to be written. He had seen, by the way his "declarations" had been received, that Lopez, though in many things showing a marvellous degree of shrewdness and cunning, in all matters touching himself was little better than a lunatic or an idiot. With this knowledge of the man whom he was to glorify and vindicate to the world, he began his task, which, before it was concluded, formed a volume of three hundred and twenty-three pages.\*

Few men, indeed scarcely any except those who are put forward as candidates for President, are so eminent either in good or evil as to have their biographies written while yet living. Lopez, however, having resolved to make me one of those few and favored individuals who are permitted to read the story of their own famous deeds, set Bliss to the task of relating them ; and so well satisfied was he with the execution

\* "Historia Secreta de la Mision del Ciudadano Norte Americano Charles A. Washburn cerca del Gobierno de la Republica del Paraguay. Por el Ciudadano Americano, Traductor titular (in partibus) de la misma mision, PORTER CORNELIO BLISS, B. A. 'Quousque tandem, abutere patientia nostra.' — *Cicero*."



of it, that he took every possible opportunity to send the book abroad to convince the world that he had defeated the greatest diplomatist, and the boldest, most unscrupulous intriguer, who had ever sought to make kings and emperors the "mere titular dignitaries of the chess-board."

The book (written in Spanish), commences with the following paragraph: "Charles Ames Washburn, late Minister of the United States in the Republic of Paraguay, is a personage that, for his own misfortune, will figure so much in the annals of four countries of South America that some details on his biography cannot be otherwise than interesting to all who care for contemporaneous history." The author then goes on to state that "he had enjoyed great advantages for the fulfilment of the task that he had undertaken, from having received from the mouth of his hero the relation of the rogueries of his childhood, the follies of his youth, and the inexpressible as innumerable adventures of his advanced age." As a youth, the author says that the subject of his memoir was one of those who give early promise of rising to eminence by being hanged; and that, "among the other precious qualities that adorned the hope of the family, and which caused unceasing anxiety to his parents, was a constitutional inability to distinguish between *meum* and *teum*, which induced them to consult a physician of the place, who gave them the benevolent decision that it was an organic infirmity known in the profession by the scientific name of kleptomania! and that perhaps he would be cured by diet and by the assiduous use of certain remedies. The remedies indicated were tried, but without result; and it is sad to add that our hero yet suffers with frequent attacks of kleptomania."

The unfortunate youth is afterwards sent away to school, where he learns all that ought not to be learned and little else, and is expelled from different institutions of learning on account of his mental or moral depravity. Every anecdote, from the time of the peripatetics of students reprimanded or ridiculed by their teachers which the author can recollect, is made to do service in this biography. His hero's



favorite books in youth were the works of Shakespeare, Charles Lamb, and *Foe Miller*; and at a later period, Machiavelli, John Stuart Mill, and Henry Thomas Buckle. The cause of his leaving college so abruptly is thus explained: "The cause of this new misfortune is not perfectly clear, and is one of the matters on which he always preserved a significant silence; but the explanation that rumor gives is, that it was connected with the disappearance of certain silver spoons from the table of the academic dining-room." Having tried his hand at a variety of occupations, the subject of this biography obtains a clerkship at Washington, where, according to the biographer, "he was given up to the pleasures and orgies of the capital in company with the dissolute youth he met there, and was expelled from office without a certificate of character; and when he left, his reputation was well established as a rake given up to the bottle, to gambling, and the pleasures of the table."

The future "evil genius of Paraguay" afterwards becomes a schoolmaster, then a lawyer, then a doctor, in all of which professions he attains similar distinction. As a lawyer he had no clients; and as a doctor his patients ordered their coffins before consulting him. At last, however, the hero of this volume abandons the scenes of his early triumphs, and flees to California. "There, among the purlieus of political intrigue, in the worst-governed city of the world, where crime most abounded, he found the field of his natural abilities." He gathered around him a set of desperadoes, and was known as the chief of a gang of political demagogues. "Then the administration of the city of San Francisco was in the hands of the comrades of Washburn, depraved men, whose rule was a true reign of terror." The power of this leader of the roughs was "cut short by the rising of the people, who constituted themselves a vigilance committee, and improvised a code of laws after the style of Draco, and sent to the gallows by the dozen the most daring of the ruffians that before had ruled the metropolis. Their leader just escaped with his life, by fleeing on board a vessel bound for Panama, at the first mutterings of the tempest."



The fugitive from the vigilance committee tries his hand at writing a novel, of which the principal characters are the most abandoned wretches found in any work of fiction, one of whom is the type of himself, and escapes hanging in a similar manner. The versatile hero next becomes an editor, and serves up to his readers old jokes that can be understood because they are old, and new ones that cannot because they are original. That the original wit might not be lost, the following notice was kept standing at the head of the column in which it appeared: "The editor gives notice to his subscribers, that if there may be any among them who hereafter may not comprehend the whole sense of his original jokes, he will have much pleasure in going round to the houses of such subscribers as may desire it, in order to explain, *viva voce*, the meaning of all that may have appeared obscure in these jests."

This accommodating editor adds to his other qualifications for office that of a poet; and his biographer devotes some six pages to a criticism of his poetry, not a line of which, unfortunately, is he able to remember. The critique, however, as a literary feat, is a remarkable production, and illustrates, as well as anything can, the situation of the author at the time he was writing it. Literally, he was *writing for life*; and was contriving every possible way to spin out his work till something should come to his rescue. To criticise imaginary poetry and "body forth the form of things unknown" was only to be done by one who could "give to airy nothings a local habitation and a name." But Bliss, though a prodigy of learning and a living encyclopædia of knowledge, was not aware till then that he possessed the divine afflatus, or held the poet's pen; and yet he gives a slashing criticism of poetry that was never written, which would have done honor to a quarterly review. In relating his experience at this time, he has since said that his mind was abnormally active. His ideas were not clogged by over-indulgence at the table, for while thus engaged he never had half so much to eat as he wanted, and what he did get was seldom anything more than



a bit of boiled beef without salt. He was kept at work incessantly for twelve or fourteen hours a day, a guard over him all the time to keep him up to his task, being frequently roused up at night to correct his proofs. In spite of himself, therefore, his work got on faster than he desired ; and at the rate he was progressing it would be completed before the hundred days which he fixed as the time that must pass before the squadron would come after him. To gain time, he made errors in his manuscript, and a great number of corrections in his proofs ; and when these were returned to him, he would correct them again and then again, thus prolonging his task, as did Penelope her web while waiting the return of Ulysses.

About forty pages of the book are devoted to the life of his hero previous to his appointment as Minister to Paraguay, which was conferred upon him, notwithstanding his notorious character, at the instigation of the Rhode Island Company, and especially of their former agent, E. A. Hopkins. Some twenty pages more are devoted to his career during his first residence in Paraguay, in which he showed himself to be a bitter enemy of both government and people ; and yet he so won the esteem and confidence of his Excellency, Francisco Solano Lopez, that he covered him with benefits, and loaded him down with money to expend for the benefit of Paraguay, but which he put in his own pocket, and left his illustrious friend to look elsewhere for his lost treasure. When he left the country he did not intend to return to it, but unexpected events at home, particularly the death of President Lincoln, decided him to go back ; and as soon as he reached Rio de Janeiro, he was taken into the councils of the Brazilian government, and became their paid agent, holding the most confidential relations with the Emperor and his principal ministers. His pretended quarrel with Admiral Godon was a farce, all arranged to deceive the American government, as he was receiving four thousand dollars a month from the Emperor during all the time of his delay. His own government, however, at last imperatively orders him to his post ; and so at last he passes through the blockade, being continued in receipt of an in-



come from the allies, compared with which his salary from his own government is a mere bagatelle.

Having exhausted that part of the early life of his hero, Mr. Bliss was at a loss for another subject on which to enlarge. But as it was known to Lopez that during my residence in Paraguay I had been collecting materials for a book on the country, a part of which was already written, he instructed his inquisitors to question the prisoner as to the tenor and contents of the forthcoming volume. By this time Bliss had shown so much zeal in denouncing and exposing the subject of his biography, had abused him with such apparent unction, had cursed him so roundly for having seduced him from the path of virtue, and from the loyalty and devotion that was justly due the "greatest warrior of the age," that Lopez seemed to believe that he had in reality become my bitterest enemy; that he had been conquered by kindness, and converted to be his friend and champion. He did not, however, take off his fetters or give him any better food. So long as a man, though a starved prisoner who had often been tortured, had breath in his body, Lopez considered that he owed him an infinite debt of gratitude; and that, if afterwards he were set at liberty, he ought to spend his days in defending the cause and person of his magnanimous benefactor, and in chanting his praises. My biographer, therefore, continued on the dangerous experiment of giving from memory what he called quotations from my unpublished book, in which he resolved to incorporate so much truth, that, though Lopez was not acute enough to see his object, it would, if ever published and circulated beyond the limits of the Paraguayan camp, enlighten the world as to the tyrant's character and government. As fast as eight pages of his work were completed, it was printed and distributed through the army.

The object of Lopez in circulating the advance sheets is intelligible, so long as the work was limited to abuse of me; but that he should continue to do the same afterwards, when the sheets thrown off contained little more than the most violent denunciations of himself, seems almost as incompre-



hensible as the mystery of the great conspiracy. During the long and intimate acquaintance which I had had with Mr. Bliss, every act of importance in the career of Lopez had been passed in review by us, and we were perfectly in accord in our estimate of his character ; our opinion being that of every intelligent person in Paraguay, with the exceptions only of himself and Madam Lynch. These opinions were the same as have been expressed in this work, and it will be found that the material facts in Bliss's book and mine in regard to the character and conduct of Lopez are virtually the same. Many things in Bliss's narrative, however, are not in mine ; some for the reason that they are of too gross a character to be believed by the general reader, even if true, and some because I had never heard of them till I saw them in my own biography.

From this singular book I shall translate a few pages, regretting that I cannot give the larger part of it. If the author shall ever make a translation of it, and publish it with notes explaining the circumstances under which it was written, his surroundings, and the hints received from the torturers, the quotations from old Latin works furnished by the priests who watched the progress of his writing it, it could hardly fail to be as extensively read as ever was Robinson Crusoe or Gulliver's Travels.

In giving what he called extracts from my manuscripts, he more frequently gave the substance of conversations that actually took place. Long before Lopez had marked me out as one of his victims, I had, in a conversation with Bliss, compared him to Rehoboam, and from this suggestion my biographer gives the following as an extract from my book : —

“The conduct of Lopez forcibly suggests the analogy of Rehoboam, son and successor of Solomon, of whom the Bible gives the following account. The Hebrew people, during the latter part of the reign of King Solomon, having been oppressed with heavy labors for the construction of the celebrated Temple and other objects, some of them conceived great hopes that their burdens would be alleviated by the son, and in that expectation addressed him their



supplications. Rehoboam, unused to the cares of empire, collected in a council the old servants of the crown, and submitted to them these petitions. The council of old men gave their opinion in favor of the petitioners, and so represented to the young king ; but he in the mean while had taken a dislike to those old public functionaries, and, before deciding, he convoked a company of the young companions of his orgies. These furnished to Rehoboam the text of the famous answer to the petitioners in the opposite sense, that is : ' My father has loaded you with light yokes, but I will oppress you with heavy yokes ; my father has chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions : my little finger shall be thicker than my father's loin.'

" In the same way General Lopez has discharged ' the most aged and faithful servants of his father, until it came to this, that to have belonged to the council of the last administration soon came to be a just ground of suspicion and persecution of the new *régime*. Very soon the principal personages among them fell under the stern rod of the Paraguayan laws, that in other words are the despotic mandates of the modern Rehoboam, in comparison with whose atrocities the rule of the autocrats of all the Russians is mercy itself, and the worst rigors of the Holy Inquisition are tender caresses."

Following this estimate of the character of Lopez, probably the most just one he ever heard expressed of himself, the biographer next gives the opinion of the barbarian Minister, who " had just escaped by the skin of his teeth," and gone abroad to spread his calumnies on those holy men, the Paraguayan priests : —

" In the world are three classes of despotisms, civil, ecclesiastic, and military, each of which is sufficient to effect the misery of a people ; but the unhappy Republic of Paraguay is the only country in the world where are found all three in a state of full activity and perfect equilibrium, administered by the great *Equilibrista* of the Plata. If the civil despotism is the head, the ecclesiastic and military are the two arms, of the present government ; all the clergy, from the bishop down, being but an active instrument of espionage systematized into complete subordination. The immorality of the Paraguayan clergy is excessive, and runs apace with its gross igno-



rance. As there is scarcely a priest in the whole Republic that knows more Latin than is strictly necessary to mutilate the words of the holy office, who can believe that the Great Architect of the universe would wish to be represented on earth by such a vile horde of intriguers and spies?"

From the treatment that the priests were receiving about this time, it would seem that Lopez had a very similar opinion in regard to them as is here expressed. For while Bliss was pretending to quote to him from my manuscripts the calumnies on those pious sons of the Church, all the more intelligent among them, excepting only Padre Maiz, were prisoners in fetters, several being within sight of his hut.

Of Lopez's courage and fitness for military command I am thus made to speak by my biographer:—

"When Washburn came to treat of the military knowledge and strategy of the Marshal, he represented them to be very limited, and asserted more than once that he lacked the first requisite of a soldier,—personal valor! That the Marshal had an extraordinary regard for the safety of his own skin, and that he is perhaps the only general in the world, at least of those who have directed a campaign as chief, that does not know personally the emotions of the battle-field, as he has never had a near view of any combat of war, and has always remained at a respectable distance from the scene of battle, whilst he showed a criminal disregard of the lives of his subjects, whom he sacrificed by thousands without the least compunction; that if the Marshal had at any time established or given proof of his personal valor, his present conduct in keeping himself far from the immediate theatre of battle could not be criticised, but that nobody had a right to demand from his subordinates a bravery and contempt of life of which he had not at any time given an example. Notwithstanding this, Marshal Lopez wishes to have the reputation of surpassing valor, and to be considered as one who is accustomed to cavort unterrified on his mettlesome charger, in the midst of a shower of bombs and balls."

How Lopez could permit a man to write truths like these I have quoted, and which everybody around him knew to be truths, whether quotations from me or original with Bliss, seems scarcely credible even to me, who have known of so many of



his stupid and foolish acts, and have the book before me from which I make the translations. The others saw through the trick, and on several occasions Padre Maiz said to the prisoner, *sotto voce*, that, while he was pretending to be quoting from me, he was writing a most scathing criticism on his Excellency.

The character of Lopez having been portrayed in such colors, the biographer next proceeds to quote from my forthcoming book my opinions of the principal characters among the allies, of whom he says I speak in terms of the bitterest sarcasm and contempt, notwithstanding the large sums of gold they had paid me to be their friend and champion, and at the very time I was writing the most biting satires on the Emperor Pedro II., Caxias, Octaviano, Mitre, and others, I was in fact the Brazilian Minister Plenipotentiary, and receiving a fabulous salary from the imperial treasury.

"From a regard to truth," says the author of this interesting work, "we shall admit that the satires which Washburn hurls at his *friends* — Caxias, Mitre, *et id omne genus* — are well merited, and sometimes felicitous. This part of his work was written about the middle of the year 1867, when the scheme of the revolution was not far advanced, and when the fierce anger of his hate — beyond the theological — towards this Republic had not arrived at the extreme to which it afterwards reached. Therefore this part of the work of Washburn is the only part that possesses any merit; and leaving out of view the ingratitude, we can applaud the justice of his hits. They have deserved it, but not from him, will be the judgment of the impartial reader; since our hero satirizing his comrades among the allies would be like the pot calling the kettle black, or, more expressively, Satan rebuking sin. If it is true that the characters of the chiefs of the alliance are not completely immaculate, it is no less certain that their implacable-satirist is one on which coal would make a white mark.

'O wad some power the giftie gie us,  
To see oursels as others see us!'

has sung the inspired bard of Scotland. When the Marques de Caxias may see the pages of Washburn, ingratitude, more sharp than treacherous steel, will quite conquer him; he will exclaim, '*Et tu, Brute*. This is the most unkindest cut of all! Get thee behind me, Satan! Take any form but that! Save me from my friends!'



Probably he will.

In giving so many and such long extracts from this book of Bliss, it has not been my object to amuse the reader so much as to let him understand the contemptible character of Lopez. Every page of it, before it was published, was submitted to him and approved, and in one sense it may be considered Lopez's book. His object, undoubtedly, in sending it abroad, was to vindicate himself, and to prove to the world that the minister of another country, whom he had so grossly insulted, whose ambassadorial rights he had outraged, and whose employees he had imprisoned, was none other than the arch-plotter of modern diplomacy, the agent of foreign potentates who sought to deprive the Paraguayan people of their liberties ; that he was a scoffer at religion, the very Antichrist who would defile the fountains of knowledge by substituting for the pious teachings of the priests of Paraguay the doctrines of such profane writers as Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, John Stuart Mill, Buckle, and Tennyson. These writers are the ones most frequently quoted by Bliss ; and as it is scarcely possible that Lopez ever heard of them before, he must have imagined, from the frequency with which Shakespeare was quoted, that he was the inventor and advocate of all abominable doctrines. To give a more complete idea of the character of the book, I translate a few pages for a foot-note.\* These will

\* "It is a portentous phenomenon," says Bliss, pretending to quote from me, "how this people has been able to consent to be their own hangman, in the same way that sometimes the Roman citizens, whose death the tyrant Nero desired, received permission from the Emperor to open their veins. . . . It is inexplicable how this people, seeing itself, like Prometheus, chained to a rock, whilst a vulture (the Marshal) devours its entrails, and being able, by a simple gesture, to break these chains, there has not been found one to act the part of Junius Brutus ; that it can only be explained by the ancient proverb, 'WHOM THE GODS WISH TO DESTROY THEY FIRST MAKE MAD!!!' That, without doubt, among the designs of God is the complete destruction of the Paraguayan race, as the fig-tree in the Evangel, of which, not having produced fruit for three years (the years of the war), Jesus Christ said, 'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' That already are very near the *dies iræ*, *dies illa* of the Paraguayan people. That God's vengeance may be slow, but it is sure, approaching with an imperceptible step, as the Greek poet Æschylus has expressed it (that applying them to the delays of the allied forces Washburn has repeated times without number



serve to show, not so much the wealth of the writer in quotations, his remarkable memory, and a playfulness of style,

in conversation), 'The avenging gods are shod with wool.' That for their stupidity and blindness, and other sins, the Paraguayan people have merited the complete extermination that awaits them, and that the world will have reason to congratulate itself when there shall not be in it a single person that speaks the accursed Guarani idiom.

"That at the mouth of the river Paraguay ought to be erected a column with this warning inscription, which Dante in his poem of the *Divina Commedia* represents to have been placed above the door of hell, 'All you who enter here, leave hope behind!' And, changing the solemn style for the festive, he says there are two classes of men that ought never to come to Paraguay, — the fools and the men of sense; and that his advice to all persons who think of coming here would be the same that Punch gave to persons about to marry, — 'don't' . . .

"That as in the feast of Belshazzar, the last night of the Babylonian Empire, appeared in characters of fire traced upon the wall, by a visible hand, the warning prediction, *Mene tekeli upharsin*, the same prophecy is already written against the Republic of Paraguay (and particularly against Marshal Lopez) in letters so large that he that runs may read them!!! That the Marshal has the greatest reason to exclaim, in the famous words of Prince Metternich, 'After me the deluge,' since as the prophet Daniel had prognosticated that the end of Babylon would be by a deluge, the same will happen in the present case.

"That, as to exclamations, Lopez will find more than one that will be suggested in his last extremities in the two master works of Shakespeare, the celebrated dramas of Richard III. and Macbeth, whose heroes, kings, one of England and the other of Scotland, were flagrant criminals, in whose death, as tragic as well deserved, the Marshal could get a glimpse of his own if he knew enough of English to read what he would recommend to him."

The story of Richard's death is then related at considerable length, and a description is given of the manner in which the shades of his many illustrious victims arise from the earth and pass in slow procession before him, each one shaking his bony finger at him, "at which Richard, starting up, calls out, 'A horse, a horse! my kingdom for a horse!' In such case Lopez (adds Washburn, with gross indecency) would be satisfied with a jackass." Then the tragic story of Macbeth's last hours is related, and it is foretold by the same irreverent prophet that Lopez will have the same death; but having already perished like Belshazzar and Richard, he must have been a character like Mrs. Malaprop's Cerberus, "three gentlemen at once."

"Macbeth also knew of the death of his queen, the accomplice of his crimes, and kept on to the last point of desperation; one of his suite having hinted to him that something should be arranged for to-morrow, there broke forth from his agonized heart this tremendous soliloquy: —

'To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps on its petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death.'



under the circumstances, still more remarkable, as the incredible stupidity of Lopez in publishing and circulating a

"And though Jesus Christ may have said, Take no thought of to-morrow, for to-morrow will take care of itself, yet Lopez has too often present to his mind the avenging shears of the *Parcæ*, that will cut the throat of his criminal existence, to fail to appreciate the whole force of these lines.

"Before leaving the arsenal of war that he had found in Shakespeare, our prophet wished to throw the last dart against Marshal Lopez, remembering in the tragedy of Julius Cæsar the appeal of Cassius to Brutus inciting him to take part in the conspiracy against the life of Cæsar, —

'Now, in the name of all the gods at once,  
Upon what meat hath this our Cæsar fed,  
That he hath grown so great?'

And answered the question contained in these lines, saying that probably Lopez had nourished his heroic valor on lion's marrow, and concluded saying he has no doubt that Lopez in his disturbed dreams had seen many times a spectre like that which appeared to Brutus, saying, 'I am thy evil genius! You will see me at Philippi.' . . . .

"Lopez has imitated exactly the conduct of the celebrated Scottish Chief Lochiel in disregarding an augury, very similar to that which before the battle of Culloden, in 1745, was given by a Highland seer in these words, according to the poetic version of Campbell: —

'Lochiel! Lochiel! beware of the day,' etc.

"That Lopez also pretends to gifts of inspiration, and in an address in the Guarani language to the officers of his army in Humaita, near the beginning of the war, he told them, 'This hand has signed the commissions of five hundred of you, and has been guided in it by the direct inspiration of God!'

"That if the inspiration of God were never more effective than in the case alluded to, the inspiration of the Devil would be better, since the greater part of those to whom this speech was addressed did not respond to the expectations of Lopez, and many of them have been compelled to go and give an account of their inspired commissions by means of four shots that the inspired Lopez had ordered to be discharged at them. . . . .

"That if this state of things should continue much longer, the Republic will be converted into a vast prison, in which the entire population will be shut up, and that then Marshal Lopez, being the only person who will remain at liberty, may mount the tribune, shaking in his hands the keys of the prisons, and proclaim to the astonished world, parodying the words of Louis XIV., (*L'État c'est moi!*) 'I am the Paraguayan people. Order reigns in Warsaw. The Paraguayan people is free and happy, and has had no part in the iniquitous plan of revolution incited by some traitors in its bosom.' Washburn added that this discourse would perfectly express the idea that the Marshal has of what constitutes the liberty of a people, since he accepts without reserve the famous definition enunciated by James I. of England: 'A free government is that in which the monarch is perfectly free to do whatever he pleases.'"

— *Extracts from Bliss's "Historia Secreta,"* pp. 113 to 120.



work of this kind in vindication of himself. It fully equals Francia's letter of vindication against the charges of Dr. Rengger. Frequently passages are given in Latin as quotations where the Latin is made for the occasion, and ascribed to writers of whom neither Lopez nor any of his inquisitors ever heard.

The quotations which I have given from this book show that Bliss was trying to work upon the superstitious fears of Lopez. In another place, as a reason for introducing such absurdities as signs and omens, he describes me as a great believer in them, and as having a variety of ways by which I prognosticated the future. Among other portentous signs that to me were of prophetic import were certain letters. The letter B was of all in the alphabet most ominous of disaster to Lopez; and to call his attention to the fact, Bliss gives the following proofs that it was really so:—

“And what shall we say of the stupendous discovery that Washburn made about this time, *that the letter B is of evil omen for Marshal Lopez*; as all the countries, persons, and things whose names begin with this letter seemed to have entered into a conspiracy against the Marshal? As such, he cited the *countries* Brazil, Buenos Aires, Banda Oriental; and also, for certain contingencies, Bolivia and Great *Britain*. The persons alluded to were the brothers of the Marshal, Benigno and Venancio, (whose name he spelled with a B,—*Benancio*!) the Bishop, Barrios, Bedoya, Berges, Bruguez, Benitez, Bliss, Bareiro (Candido), Brizuela, and *Bonaparte*; and the author does not know why he did not cite Beelzebub and Belial, as these illustrious persons ought not to be omitted from such a list. The *things* which were mentioned in this strange connection were the ironclads (*blindados*), the blockade, batteries, bombs, balls, and bayonets of the enemy. . . .

“Apropos of this list, the author wishes here to suggest to his hero, what did not occur to him at the time, that, as he included Venancio in the list, substituting a B for a V in his eccentric orthography, he might with double reason have included his own name, as in that case the double V (W) would signify with great truth a *double fatality*!”

Thus while Lopez by brutal force was extorting such “con-



fessions" as these from his victim, the latter was playing on his known credulity and superstition, and telling him of the horrid visions and killing remorse of others, who like him had shed seas of innocent blood. In the course of his work Bliss also stated that the late Minister had fully appreciated the dangers from which he had escaped, and had frequently said, during the two months preceding the arrival of the *Wasp*, that he was likely to be "the hero of his own novel," who, in endeavoring to serve and save others, had exposed himself to a miserable death.

The portrait of Lopez, as drawn by Bliss in the extracts I have given, was very correct; and in reading them he must have seen that every stroke had been suggested by acts that were notorious; and if he believed that I had gone away with the proofs of his cowardice, his cruelty, his jealousy and thirst of blood, which I had already arranged for publication, he must have been even more angry with himself that he had not made way with me before the arrival of the *Wasp* than he was after the receipt of my letter denouncing him as an enemy of the human race and a common thief. It would be a satisfaction to many to know how he received these advance sheets of his own biography. Did he regard them as so preposterous and extravagant that they could never affect his name or reputation? Did he still believe that the words which his paramour, his torturers and inquisitors, were constantly whispering in his ears, that he was too good, too kind-hearted, too unsuspicious, too reckless of danger, were the same that would be finally inscribed on the page of history? Or did he take a delight in contemplating the destruction he had caused, and reflect with satisfaction that his would be a name forever accursed in the future annals of his country; and that, like Attila, he had achieved a name so infamous in history that men would call him the "Scourge of God." Did he glory in leaving a

" . . . name to other times,  
Linked with *no* virtue, and a thousand crimes " ?

The book reaches its climax with the concluding para-



graphs. The writer, having spun out his story to such length, is admonished that he must bring it to a close. He anticipates that with the conclusion of the work will come the order for his execution. He therefore makes a last appeal for life by swearing that if it shall be spared him he will spend it in exposing and bringing to justice the "evil genius of Paraguay":—

"We have sketched with free strokes the history of the greatest violation of the duties of a neutral diplomaté that modern times can offer. We denounce to the Divine anger, to the opprobrium of the world, and to the condign punishment of his country, Charles Ames Washburn as guilty of high treason, and particularly of an enormous conspiracy against the government to which he was accredited, and against the life of the supreme Magistrate of this Republic of Paraguay.

"Our present task is concluded ; but at laying aside the pen we swear solemnly, if God gives us the opportunity, to follow Washburn through all the earth until he shall receive the just punishment of his unheard-of and execrable crimes!!!"

This book, though as an intellectual and literary feat a most remarkable production, certainly shows little of the heroic or noble in the author ; and a person reading it, who knew nothing of the circumstances under which it was written, while he could not but wonder at the great memory and extensive reading of the writer, as evinced by his numerous and often very long quotations from a multiplicity of authors, would naturally have great contempt for his character. That any person having a proper sense of honor and decency should make up such a farrago of falsehoods about a man who had for years befriended him, and on whose efforts to save him hung, at the very time he was writing, his only hope of life, appears incredible. The utter want of taste and delicacy shown in the book would seem to be impossible to a man having a due regard to them, and the sustained humor and wit, taken with the professed indignation and repentance, would appear to be hardly within the range of human power and self-control, unless the writer were in earnest, and enjoyed the labor in which he was engaged.



Other men of unimpeachable character and the highest sense of honor had confessed to having committed the same acts as those admitted by Mr. Bliss, and no one who knew of the horrid appliances that Lopez made use of to extort confessions ever reproached them for doing so. The apparent pleasure, however, that Bliss took in imposing his fabulous stories on Lopez was well calculated to create a prejudice against him among those who were not aware of the circumstances under which the book had been written. As I was the only person to be affected by his startling revelations, garnished with allusions and anecdotes of at least questionable taste, it would hardly be supposed that the very parties who were most unfriendly to me should be the most indignant with Bliss. The officers of the squadron affected to be very angry with him that he should thus calumniate a friend and benefactor, at the same time that they tried to create an impression in the public mind that his accusations were true, and that they had obtained irrefragable evidence while in Paraguay that there had been a great conspiracy, of which I had been the master spirit. They assailed me because I had needlessly abandoned Bliss to the horrid cruelties of Lopez, and then, when he had been rescued from his perilous position, they treated him like a felon, alleging as a reason his ingratitude to me ; and next, to crown all, they became the apologists and defenders of Lopez, and tried to excuse his barbarities, though numerous and unimpeachable witnesses testify to his having committed almost every crime imaginable, and such as were never committed before by any person bearing the human form.

The book was a success, and its style had made it so ; for, writing it as he did, Mr. Bliss so interested Lopez that he was permitted to continue at his work until so long a time had expired that he might reasonably hope for deliverance.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Arrival of the Wasp. — Admiral Davis's Letter to Lopez. — The New American Minister. — The Release of Bliss and Masterman demanded. — Lopez boasts that he has the Naval Officers on his Side. — Interviews between Davis and Lopez. — Bliss and Masterman regarded as Criminals. — Lopez's Opinion of Davis. — Davis sends two of his Officers to verify the Declarations of Bliss and Masterman before the Tribunal. — Extracts from the Testimony taken during the Paraguayan Investigation. — Joy of Bliss and Masterman on learning that their Deliverance was at Hand. — Lopez's sudden Turn of Affection for Bliss. — The Incomprehensible Character of Lopez.

THE book at last being finished, the author was anxiously waiting to know whether Lopez had any further use for him than to shoot him. The last sheet of manuscript had but just passed from his hands when the American flag was again discovered by the advanced pickets on the river-bank. What followed was thus related by Bliss to the Committee on Foreign Affairs : —

“I had spun my pamphlet out as long as it was possible, and finally brought it to a conclusion on the 2d of December ; that is to say, the printing was finished then ; the writing had been finished some time before. On the 4th of December I was told that Marshal Lopez, out of his unbounded clemency, had determined to mitigate my sufferings, and a blacksmith was called in to take off my fetters. I had worn my fetters all this time, and had been kept on starvation diet, which consisted of a small ration of boiled beef twice a day, with a little cake of mandioca flour, made from the root of a vegetable of that country used as a substitute for potatoes. The diet was insufficient in quantity. I could have eaten, at any time, twice as much as I received. I was then asked what I would do in case I should see Mr. Washburn, or be brought face to face with him. I was asked if I remembered the concluding paragraph of my pamphlet, in which I expressed myself as desiring nothing



better than to be allowed to go away from Paraguay, in order to prosecute Mr. Washburn before his own government for malfeasance in office. I declared that I would prosecute Mr. Washburn from one end of the world to the other, until I had obtained satisfaction from him for getting me into that 'bad box.' I replied that I *did* remember it well, and quoted it. Some further hints were then given me that I might, perhaps, be soon set at liberty, though nothing definite was said on that subject. I was asked whether I would maintain my consistency in case I was the recipient of the clemency of his Excellency Marshal Lopez. A blank book was brought to me, and I was invited to write in it, and asked what I wished to write. I said I did not know ; 'I was willing to write anything.' I was set to work writing some epistles in a satirical style, directed to the commander-in-chief of the Brazilian Army, the Marques de Caxias, which were immediately published in sheets by order of Lopez. Four days later (on the 8th of December), I was called out of my hut and had an interview with the inquisitor and head torturer. I was at that time, as I have mentioned, without any irons on, they having been removed four days before. I was then told that in his most exalted clemency Marshal Lopez had resolved to *pardon* my great offences ; that a new American Minister had arrived there, and that, as an act of courtesy to this American Minister, President Lopez wished to pardon me, on condition of my maintaining *consistency* with my declarations before the tribunal, and that I was about to be brought before the tribunal for the last time ; that everything would depend upon my conduct there, and my *preserving consistency*. I had been for three months wearing the same suit of clothes, and of course my pantaloons were cut to pieces with the irons. Of course I was fearfully dirty, and covered with vermin. A pair of drawers, a shirt, and some water, were brought, and I was requested to put myself into a little more presentable condition before being called before the court for the *last act*. I was told I would find some of my countrymen there. I was not told who they were, or for what purpose they would be there. Nothing was said about the presence of the American squadron. Nothing was said about a demand having been made for our liberation. I concluded I was going to be formally sentenced to death, and that this sentence would then be remitted, and prepared to listen to such a process. But no sentence was passed upon me, and my trial never came to a technical conclusion."



By this time Admiral Davis had arrived, accompanied by Kirkland and Ramsey and Minister McMahon. Of the four gunboats that left Buenos Aires, only the Wasp came through the blockade. The others remained below to await orders.

When Lopez was notified that an American gunboat had arrived and was at anchor below Angostura, he immediately divined the object of her coming, and at first appeared greatly excited and enraged; so much so that those around him feared he would show his defiance and signalize the occasion by some new enormity. He anticipated that he would be called upon, not only to deliver up Bliss and Masterman, but to make other humiliating concessions. He was yet in this frame of mind when Commander Kirkland appeared at his head-quarters, bearing a letter from Admiral Davis. The few foreigners yet remaining in his camp, knowing the desperate state of mind that he was in, were exceedingly anxious lest he should answer the unwelcome message by arresting and shooting the bearer of it, and were greatly relieved when they saw him return unharmed to the Wasp. But the first paragraph of Admiral Davis's letter, if not the assurances of Kirkland, convinced him that Davis had come as a friend, and not as an enemy; that his object was rather to make than to demand an apology. It was in these words:—

"SIR, — I have the honor to inform your Excellency that I have arrived in front of Angostura, having on board his Excellency General M. T. McMahon, the Minister of the United States to the Republic of Paraguay."

So he was not an outlaw and a barbarian, after all. Though he had grossly insulted the last American Minister by making the most outrageous accusations against him, had threatened his imprisonment, and arrested and tortured two members of his suite, yet here was a new Minister coming with gentle words, asking to be received.

The Admiral, having thus advised Lopez that he had brought a hostage to leave in place of the prisoners in his hands, then



says: "As an indispensable preliminary step to the presentation by General McMahon to your Excellency of his credential letters, I have to request that Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, the persons arrested and detained in Asuncion while under the protection and attached to the Legation of the previous United States Minister, be restored to the authority of the United States flag."

Having read this letter, Lopez expressed a wish to have a personal interview with Admiral Davis, and requested Kirkland to return and invite him to come on shore at a later hour of the same day. As soon as Kirkland was gone, the Marshal appeared to be greatly relieved, and intimated to those around him that he had already got the naval officers on his side, "and would you believe it?" said he, "another Yankee Minister has come." As may well be supposed, the hearts of the foreigners in his camp, who had hoped that he was to be taught a lesson, and made to understand that he could not imprison and kill innocent persons with impunity, sank within them when they heard of these boastful words.

A little later he started with a part of his staff for the bank of the river, where he was met by Admiral Davis, and they had an interview that lasted for some three hours. No full report of what transpired on this occasion has ever been published; but from the course pursued afterwards by the Admiral, it would seem that he was completely charmed and captivated by the Marshal. What proofs Lopez offered to disprove the statements that I had made, and which the Admiral had evidently come to seek, the latter has never made public. In his report of the interview to the Secretary of the Navy, he said, however, that Lopez did not object to delivering up the men, but was unwilling to concede that they had ever been members of the Legation, and therefore objected to surrendering them at a request based on that ground. He accordingly desired that Davis should withdraw that letter and write another, so that by surrendering them he would not yield the point so long in dispute between him and me. The Admiral, promising to write such a letter, returned



on board the Wasp, deeply impressed with the courtesy and frankness of the Marshal ; and Lopez, feeling very jubilant, went back to his head-quarters. The high opinion which the Admiral conceived of Lopez was not reciprocated by the latter. On the contrary, when he reached his head-quarters, he expressed the greatest contempt for his visitor, exulting over his success in outwitting him, and said he was anything but a soldier.

In the next letter of the Admiral, dated on the 4th of December, he makes no allusion to the fact that Bliss and Masterman had been members of the United States Legation, and says that it does not belong to him to define, or even to consider, the status of these individuals, but that "Lopez may repose confidence in the justice and friendship of the United States." He also promises that any papers which Lopez "may be pleased to send with those individuals will be transmitted to Washington by the earliest opportunity."

But even this did not satisfy Lopez ; and on the following day a note was sent to the Admiral, signed by the military secretary of Lopez, in which, with an insolence and impudence showing that he had rightly gauged the firmness and calibre of the man he was dealing with, he tells him that "he should not conceal from himself the fact that Bliss and Masterman are criminals deeply committed in the affairs of a horrible conspiracy, very particularly the former." Nevertheless, Lopez says he will deliver them up, "provided it is requested in a manner more in conformity with the fact of their being accomplices of Mr. Washburn, and the first intimately acquainted with his intrigues in the character of conspirator and agent of the enemy, of which he is now accused in the national tribunal, since they would be useful in the administration of justice by the American government, to whose judgment he would confide the above-mentioned criminals."

The demand that the Admiral shall first recognize Bliss and Masterman as criminals, and my accomplices in a conspiracy, is immediately assented to by the Admiral. In a letter to Lopez of the same date, he says that it is no part of his



official duty "either to offer or refuse any terms which will affect the alleged criminal conditions of the two persons in question." Having made this concession, the Admiral again reminds Lopez that he has a Minister with him who is waiting to present his credentials ; and says that he wishes Bliss and Masterman to be sent on board, in order that he "may keep them in security, subject to the government of the United States." By this time, however, he begins to fear that it is Lopez's purpose not to deliver them ; and he therefore requests to be informed when he may expect to receive them on board, or else to be apprised that it is not his Excellency's intention to send them at all.

To this Lopez replies that it has never been his intention not to give them up, but in doing so it would be as a courtesy to the United States. The reclamation or demand being waived by the Admiral, the "criminals," as they are invariably called, would be sent on board the Wasp on the afternoon of the 8th of December. There was, however, another preliminary to their rendition. Lopez desired to further humiliate and degrade the naval service of the United States by having two officers of the squadron to assist at his "solemn tribunal," and *verify as witnesses the "declarations" of those who were to be delivered up as my accomplices, and sent as prisoners for trial to the United States.*

I have now to give the circumstances and details of a transaction that I would gladly pass over unnoticed. The story must cause a blush of shame to mantle the cheek of every American that reads it ; and whoever else may know of it will bless his lot that the shame and disgrace of the act does not attach to his own country. That such acts may not be repeated, the people must know of them. It is nothing that the Navy Department may be advised of them ; for, as we have before seen, it is according to the policy and system of that department to defend and justify every act of its higher officers, no matter how tyrannical or disgraceful to the country and the service.

Admiral Davis having promised to send the two officers to



join the court of inquisition, his fleet-captain, Francis M. Ramsey, and Commander Kirkland, were sent on shore, on the morning of the 8th of December, to render that last humiliating service to Lopez.

In the mean while Bliss and Masterman were made aware that something had occurred which promised deliverance. On the day after the interview between Lopez and the Admiral, and two days after his book was finished, Bliss received the first intimation that it was not the purpose of Lopez to execute him. He thus relates the incident :—

“I was brought before the tribunal, and found there two of our naval officers, to whom I was introduced in a very indistinct way. I understood one to be Lieutenant-Commander Kirkland. The other officer's name I did not then catch, but ascertained subsequently that it was Fleet-Captain Ramsey, chief of staff to Admiral Davis. These officers said nothing to me except to ask my name, — ‘Are you Bliss? or are you Masterman?’ I replied, giving my name. The tribunal then proceeded to cause all my depositions which had been taken down, during twenty days or more, to be read over, occupying the entire afternoon in the process. This took place in the mud hut in which the tribunal was held by the two priests I have referred to. These two naval officers took seats with the members of the tribunal, with whom they were laughing, smoking, drinking brandy, and receiving presents.\* They seemed to be on

\* It should be here stated that Captain Ramsey, when before the Congressional Committee, denied that he partook of the refreshments offered. His testimony is as follows :—

“While standing outside, talking to these officers, one of whom had been in London and the other in Paris, a boy passed by wearing a pretty embroidered shirt, which I remarked upon, and asked if that was the work of the country. They told me that it was, and that their women prided themselves on that kind of work. He then sent into the house for some specimens of the work, and a shirt and a towel were brought out. He handed me the towel, and said, ‘Perhaps your countrymen would like to see some specimens of Paraguayan work. Won't you take this?’ He then gave me the towel, which I have brought with me, for the purpose of showing it to the Committee. I received nothing else. They also brought out some *caña* and cigars, and asked us to partake of them. I neither smoke nor drink, so I did not accept of their invitation. Commander Kirkland, however, did take some; and after a short recess we returned to the hut where the tribunal was held, and Masterman was brought in. While we had



the most intimate terms with the members of the tribunal, but never saying a word to me, or taking any interest in my condition. At various times during this proceeding I was called on to acknowledge the genuineness of my signatures to the successive depositions. I did so, speaking in Spanish. I was then told by one of the naval officers to speak in English, and I replied in English, 'That is my signature.' At the conclusion of this proceeding we exchanged no further words, and in the presence of the United States officers I was called upon to subscribe to the entire document, acknowledging all my signatures, and certifying again to the correctness of the entire depositions, on which the members of the tribunal and the officers of the United States Navy present signed the record. It was not stated whether or not they signed as witnesses, or as members of the tribunal. . . .

"During this interview there were present two Paraguayan officers who understood English, so that I could not have spoken freely to the American officers. The head torturer sat opposite me, sword in hand, and with his sinister eyes fixed upon me with the most menacing manner all the time." \*

been out I saw a person standing beside a tree, with a sentry near him, whom I supposed to be Mr. Masterman. As Mr. Masterman came in he had to pass close by my side, and as he passed me he said: 'You must forgive me for what I am going to say. I hoped to be spared this shame.' Those were his exact words, and I wrote them down as soon after as I could. When he was first sworn he exhibited great fear. His manner was that of a man very much alarmed; and when he took his seat he twitched and moved about all the time. He seemed very uneasy." — *Paraguayan Investigation: testimony of Fleet-Captain Francis M. Ramsey*, p. 178.

\* Questions to Mr. Bliss at his examination by the Congressional Committee:—

"Q. Did it occur to you that you could speak right out and deny all these confessions before these naval officers?

"A. The question occurred to me, and I reflected upon it as much as I could within the limited time allowed me; but I was then of the opinion, which I still hold, that my life depended upon my confirming those statements.

"Q. Did you not believe it was in the power of these officers to have protected you?

"A. No; the presence of these officers would have afforded no protection. I should have been ordered out for instant execution.

"Q. Did these officers then leave you?

"A. They did.

"Q. Did they put no questions to you at all?

"A. None, except to ask me my name, and tell me to speak in English.



Mr. Masterman was also called up, and "the terrible Padre Maiz" gave him a long lecture on the duty of consistency, and told him that it would be his duty thenceforth "to denounce Mr. Washburn as a conspirator all over the world." At hearing this, Masterman at once divined the reason of it. He thus speaks of what next occurred : —

"I could scarcely conceal my joy, for I knew that help had come ; but I replied, submissively, that what was written was written, that which I had said I could never unsay. He smiled approvingly. . . . He went on to tell me that a new Minister had arrived from the United States, and that the President had commuted my sentence of death to banishment for life, and he trusted that I would employ the rest of my days in praising the clemency of the Marshal and denouncing the wickedness of Washburn. I promised that I would make the truth fully known, (luckily he did not ask, 'What is the truth?') and now I am fulfilling that promise. A blacksmith was then called, my fetters were knocked off, and I was told that in a few days I should leave the country. I thanked him unaffectedly, but he said

When I was called upon to verify my signature, I replied, 'That is my signature.' That is all I said and all they said.

"Q. Did they ask you whether your statement was true or false ?

"A. Lieutenant-Commander Kirkland said, 'You acknowledge all that to be true?' I replied, 'Yes.'

"Q. Did he ask you how it was obtained ?

"A. He asked no further question whatever.

"Q. Did either of them remonstrate with the officer for keeping watch over you with the drawn sword ?

"A. They made no remonstrance whatever. They seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the manner affairs were going on.

"Q. Had you reason to believe that these American officers were under any impression that these statements had been extorted from you ?

"A. I did not consider it safe for me to say a word to that effect under these circumstances.

"Q. Were they under the impression that your depositions were all true ?

"A. If they were fools enough to believe so, under such circumstances, they may have done so ; in fact, I suppose they did so believe.

"Q. How long had they been in the country before this ?

"A. They had just arrived. They arrived on the second day of that month. This was on the 8th. They had had no communication with any foreigner in the country, the foreigners being all in the prison ; and they knew nothing except what Lopez had told the Admiral. Lopez said that we had freely confessed our guilt, and apparently succeeded in bamboozling him completely."



my thanks were due to the Marshal, and that I ought to write a letter to him. I excused myself by saying that he could express my gratitude so much better personally than I could in my imperfect Spanish ; but, in truth, I loathed the very idea of writing more adulation and lying compliments. . . .

"Two days afterwards I was again sent for. On my way I met Father Maiz, who repeated the substance of what he had told me before, and reminded me that my life depended on my discretion. He told me that two American officers were then waiting to hear me acknowledge the truth of my written statements, and that I must declare that they were all true ; none knowing better than he the falsity of my confession of guilt."

He was then brought before the tribunal, where he found two officers wearing the American naval uniform, and was told to listen while his "declarations" that had been extorted by means before described were read over to him in their presence and hearing. At the time they had been taken down, he had been obliged to sign each sheet on which they were written, and now he was required to verify his signature in presence of these additional members of the inquisition. On entering the miserable hut where the court was held, he found the two priests with whom he had so often been confronted before ; and to make sure that he should not deny anything before written, the head torturer of Lopez, Major Aveiro, who had not only beaten both him and Bliss most unmercifully at various times, but had put them in the *cepo uruguayana*, sat all the while in front of him, with his eyes constantly fixed upon him. The additional precaution was taken of having two Paraguayans present who understood English, so that no word not understood by the tribunal should pass between him and the officers. Neither of them gave him a word of encouragement, or intimated that he would be protected in speaking the truth. Ramsey, indeed, asked him if the depositions read to him were true, and Masterman begged that he would ask him no questions. He had good reason for doing so, for he had just been warned that his life depended on his adherence to his previous "declarations."



The declarations of both the "criminals" having been reaffirmed by them, the two priests Maiz and Roman, and the two American officers Kirkland and Ramsey, signed as witnesses, after which the accused were remanded to prison, and the officers returned on board of the gunboat.\* It was two days after this before they were delivered up; and as they had been treated so contemptuously while in the presence of the American officers, who seemed to be on the best of terms with Lopez's inquisitors, they began to apprehend that these officers had been induced to be witnesses of their declarations as

\* One of the most melancholy incidents of these Paraguayan difficulties was the humiliation experienced by Captain Ramsey on reading my correspondence with Lopez, and to which he thus pathetically testified before the Committee of Foreign Affairs:—

"Q. How do you know that Mr. Washburn would have been safe had he remained?

"A. I only know that Mr. Washburn was the representative of the United States of America accredited to the government of Paraguay, and there was no danger for any representative of a foreign government. He could have remained there with perfect safety. I felt humiliated when I read Mr. Washburn's letters.

"Q. Are you aware that Bliss and Masterman, knowing all the circumstances, advised Mr. Washburn to take the course he did take?

"A. I read that in the letter of Mr. Washburn.

"Q. Had you any reason to doubt it?

"A. No, sir.

"Q. Are you not aware that Rodriguez, Secretary of the Legation of Uruguay, duly accredited to Lopez, was kept in the country after relations were suspended, was arrested, tortured, and executed by Lopez; and that if he did it in one case he would do it in another?

"A. I know nothing about the case. I do not believe all these stories."—*Paraguayan Investigation*, pp. 184, 185.

The Committee also felt humiliated, but for another cause. In alluding to the "declarations" of Bliss and Masterman before the court of inquisition of which Ramsey and Kirkland were members, they say:—

"The 'declaration' referred to in the foregoing testimony is a so-called confession that Bliss and Masterman were engaged in a conspiracy to dethrone Lopez, and that Mr. Washburn, forgetful of the duties he owed to himself as a man, and to the government whose Minister he was, was engaged in the same conspiracy. When we reflect that this declaration had not the least semblance of truth, that it was extorted from those trembling and friendless prisoners under torture, and that the Admiral and his two witnesses had every reason to believe it had thus been extorted, we seek in vain for any excuse or palliation for their connection with this shameful transaction.—*Id.*, p. xxvi.



a step preliminary to their execution. Bliss, however, had so completely imposed on Lopez by his book, that he received comforting assurances that he would be permitted to leave Paraguay in order that he might carry into effect the threat contained in the last paragraph, "to follow Washburn through the whole world until he should bring upon him the punishment due to his unheard-of and execrable crimes."

On the day before they were delivered up, Bliss was made the object of very particular attentions. He was repeatedly told by the priests of his great obligations to his Excellency, the Marshal, who pardoned him on the condition that when beyond the limits of Paraguay he would be his friend and defender, and would not fail to bring the great intriguer, plotter, and arch-conspirator to trial and punishment by his own government. He had previously been made to write a letter to Lopez, thanking him for the great fairness and impartiality shown him at his trial, and for his abounding, unparalleled goodness in pardoning so great a criminal.

As an earnest that Bliss was not only pardoned, but forgiven, Lopez sent him a very affectionate message, and also forty copies of his pamphlet, which he was to scatter abroad, for the purpose of exposing the character of "*el gran bestia*." He also sent him some sixty dollars in gold coin, at which proof of his affection and kindness Bliss sent to ask him what disposition he should make of the \$ 5,000 in silver, and \$ 5,550 in currency, that he had received for his part in the conspiracy, and had sent out of the country by me. He received for reply that he might keep it, and make use of it in bringing to punishment the late Minister; but, if his conscience urged him to restore it, he might pay it over to the Paraguayan Legation in Paris.

Perhaps no act of Lopez so fully illustrates his weakness as this sudden turn of affection for Bliss. Was the man a fool, an idiot, to believe that a kind message sent to Bliss with a few dollars, and a few copies of his own wonderful book, would suffice to obliterate the memory of the cruel tortures he had received, and the tissue of falsehoods that he had been forced



to fabricate, and convert him to be his friend and advocate when once beyond his power? Whatever may have been his motive, the act proves that he was not a person governed by the same motives and reasoning as other men; and this deed of generosity only goes to confirm the judgment that his countless acts of cruelty have caused to be generally pronounced upon him, — that he was not, properly speaking, a member of the human family; that he was mentally a malformation, a monster.

NOTE. — For the entire correspondence between Lopez and Admiral Davis, see Appendix.



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

Arrival of Bliss and Masterman on Board the Wasp.—Their Reception.— They exchange one Prison for another.—Comparing Notes.—McMahon refuses Bliss an Interview.—The American Naval System.—The first Version of the Affair sent to the United States.—Dr. Marius Duvall.—Arrival of Bliss and Masterman in the United States.—They memorialize Congress.

IT was about eleven o'clock on the night of the 10th of December that the Paraguayan canoe having the two men whose fate had within a few months become a matter of general interest throughout a large part of Christendom came alongside the United States gunboat Wasp.

Their arrival had been anxiously expected by all on board ever since the return of the two officers who had witnessed their final confession. Commander Kirkland, who at the last scene of the inquisition had listened, and without denial or remonstrance, to the deposition of Bliss that he had carried back and forth the correspondence between the Marques de Caxias and Minister Washburn, was, of course, eagerly waiting to receive him on board the Wasp, and there, when safe from the grasp of Lopez, to hear from his own lips that all such imputations were false, and had been wrung from him by torture. The Admiral, Captain Ramsey, and General McMahon also, though late at night, left their beds to go out and hear what these men, who had been rescued at an expense of many thousand dollars to the United States, would say now that they might speak without fear of the stocks or the *cepo uruguayana*. They would also hear that they had been heartlessly abandoned by the late American Minister, who might have taken them with him when he left the country, or by remaining have saved them from the sufferings



to which they had been subjected. They had last seen them looking starved and wretched, with long, unkempt hair, and in the same clothes in which for three months they had lain in fetters on the ground, their pantaloons worn and eaten off by the iron that encased their ankles. A squadron of four vessels had come up the river to effect their rescue and vindicate the flag that had been outraged by their arrest ; and when the hail was heard from the canoe, announcing that they were coming on board, the word was passed to all that the prisoners were free, and the first order was : Bring them bread and meat, for they are perishing with hunger ; bring them wine to revive them, that they may briefly tell us of the horrors they have seen and suffered ; bring clean clothes, even from our own wardrobes ; let them be cleansed of the dirt and vermin that cover them ; and then, when that is done, give each of them a mattress to sleep upon, and to-morrow see that they want for nothing that may be required to restore them to health.

Such was the reception to which these men were looking forward when they set their feet on the gunboat, beneath the stars and stripes : but alas ! they were soon to find that they had only exchanged one prison for another ; that they had only changed keepers, and were to be exposed to a deeper shame and humiliation at the hands of Davis, Kirkland, and Ramsey than they had ever been subjected to under Lopez, Maiz, and Aveiro. As they stepped on the deck they were met by Commander Kirkland, who, without deigning to notice or speak to them, commanded the officer of the deck to call the master-at-arms and order him to "take these men forward, put a guard over them, and see that they do not loaf about." At this order, Masterman ventured to remonstrate against being sent forward among the crew ; but he was roughly answered by Kirkland, who told them he received them as criminals, and as such they would be sent to the United States. They therefore went forward, a sentry was placed over them, and they were permitted to lie down on the bare deck among the sailors. It was three months since they had been



arrested, and during all that time they had not interchanged a word with each other. Tired and weak as they were, they could not, after the excitement and anxieties of the day, sleep for several hours, but lay upon the deck comparing notes and recounting their experiences to each other. Each then learned for the first time that the other had been writing a pamphlet, by order of Lopez, in abuse of the arch-enemy of his Excellency, the late American Minister. They both now found the thread of their own stories. While writing their pamphlets they were required to introduce certain subjects in regard to trivial matters that had occurred in the Legation ; and they now found that when one alluded to anything that had occurred, or invented any story partially or entirely fictitious, the other had been required to confirm it. Hence, as it appeared, their stories had a wonderful coincidence.

The next morning they found the sentry still over them, and that all, officers and men alike, looked upon them with distrust and aversion. In the naval service, the authority of the admiral is so absolute that all seek to conform to his wishes before being ordered. Flunkyism always accompanies tyranny, and the lackey is pretty sure to ape the airs and manners of the master. These men, debilitated by exposure, by torture, and by unwholesome and insufficient food, were in such a condition that humanity would have dictated that they should be treated as invalids. One of them (Bliss) was actually sick when he came on board, and still suffering from the effects of the *cepo uruguayana*. The ship's surgeon, an amiable, kind-hearted man, was disposed to treat them with as much attention as it was safe for him to show them. But the feeling throughout the ship was that they were a couple of felons, and as such they were treated all the time they were on board the Wasp.

Their miserable condition served to excite the compassion of some of the petty officers, and in the course of a day or two they sent them some clothes, though in a manner so secret that the recipients never knew their benefactors. But not an inquiry was made in regard to their condition by Admiral



Davis or General McMahon, nor was any thought taken by Ramsey or Kirkland to see that they had a change of clothes, so that they could afford to cast their infested rags into the river. No one of these guardians of the nation's honor gave them an interview or an opportunity to tell their story of tortures and exposure. By their conduct they showed a consciousness of guilt ; and having become the champions and jailers of Lopez, they did not wish to hear any vindication of the prisoners whom, at his dictation, they had received as criminals, nor did they care to hear anything of the horrible cruelties of their newly found friend. Among themselves they talked over the propriety of giving them an interview, but Ramsey strongly objected, and the Admiral and the Minister acquiesced.

It was not till the two prisoners were safely under guard on board the *Wasp* that they learned the name of the new Minister, and not till then were they aware that anything more than a single vessel had come up the river. Having now learned, however, that General McMahon was the Minister, and that, notwithstanding the insult to his predecessor and the violation of our flag he was intending to land and present his credentials, Mr. Bliss requested the officer of the deck to take a message to him, and to say that he wished to see him and advise him of the situation of other American citizens still in Paraguay. The officer went aft with the message, and returned soon after with this answer : " When General McMahon wishes to see you, he will send for you." McMahon left the *Wasp* the next day, and Bliss did not even get a sight of him while on board the vessel.

The Minister having disembarked, the *Wasp* turned her head down stream, and returned to Corrientes, where the rest of the squadron was waiting the result of the Admiral's negotiations with Lopez. On reaching that port the officers of the inquisition, exulting in their achievements, took advantage of a mail-steamer about to start, which would reach Buenos Aires in advance of the *Wasp*, to send an account of their achievements for publication in the newspapers. The first the public heard, therefore, of their exploits, was their own version,



which was substantially this : That Bliss and Masterman had been delivered up by Lopez, notwithstanding he had produced irrefragable proof that they had been the accomplices of the late Minister in a conspiracy against his government and life ; that McMahon had accomplished prodigies of diplomacy ; and that his conduct would doubtless be highly gratifying to our government, forming, as it did, such a marked contrast to that of his wicked and unscrupulous predecessor.

On reaching Montevideo the prisoners were transferred from the *Wasp* to the flag-ship *Guerriere*, where for a day or two they were at liberty on board of the ship. They were then put under the surveillance of an officer, and denied any communication with the shore, or with individuals who came on board to see them. They were, however, provided with decent food to eat, which they never had while on board the *Wasp*. Instead of the hard-tack and salt junk of the sailors, they were put into the mess of the warrant officers, where the food was good and wholesome. Some of the petty underlings, however, seemed to think it an imposition on them to be compelled to mess with men whom their superiors treated as felons, and who were on their way to the United States to be tried for high crimes and misdemeanors. Letters to and from them were detained by the Admiral, and in some instances opened, and not delivered for several days. In fact, they were treated like condemned criminals, who were being transported to a place of execution or imprisonment.

To the credit of the naval service it should be here said that the officers of the squadron did not all take their cue from the Admiral and his favorite commanders, and think it incumbent on them to treat with insult and contumely the unfortunate prisoners. The fleet-surgeon, Dr. Marius Duvall, early divined the animus of the Admiral in going after them, and saw clearly that his object was not to extricate them, but to find excuses for his delay after his quarrel with General Webb ; that he went, determined to conciliate Lopez at any sacrifice of the national dignity, and on his return to represent him as a humane and benevolent gentleman, who in his dispute



with the late Minister, and in his subsequent treatment of Bliss and Masterman, was entirely in the right, while the latter were brawling revolutionists, who had been treated with "no unnecessary harshness." Feeling that the government did not, or at least ought not to, keep squadrons on foreign stations for the mere purpose of insulting its diplomatic representatives, Dr. Duvall did not join in with the Admiral and his favorites in praise of Lopez and in the abuse of General Webb and the late Minister to Paraguay. As a penalty for his temerity, the Admiral persecuted him on the most trivial pretexts, and ordered him to be court-martialed, naming the court that was to try him. The trial was but a contest between weakness, duplicity, and malice on one side, and firmness, truth, and patriotic duty on the other. The question turned on a point of veracity between the two, and the court that the Admiral had selected was compelled to find that the truth was not with him.

The two prisoners were kept under arrest as long as the *Guerriere* remained at Montevideo. The large first-rate was taken to Rio, at a cost of several thousand dollars, for no other purpose than to carry two men who were treated all the while as felons. They might have been sent by a merchant steamer at a cost of one hundred dollars; and the conditions which the Admiral made with Lopez would have been fulfilled as well as they were by his going with them in the flag-ship.

From Rio the Admiral sent his prisoners to the United States on a merchant steamer. To do this he was obliged to trust to the honor of men whom he had treated as condemned criminals. He notified them that their passage would be paid to New York by the government; and requested them, on reaching that port, to report themselves to the Secretary of State. They engaged to do so, and fulfilled their promise. The Secretary, Mr. Seward, told them that he had nothing against them, and the Secretary of the Navy (Gideon Welles) highly commended the Admiral for his course throughout the whole affair.



But the prisoners did not so highly appreciate the conduct of the Admiral. On the contrary, they memorialized Congress in regard to it, uniting in a joint petition for an investigation of their treatment by him and his favorite officers.\*

\* It should perhaps be here stated that there was one member of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, Thomas Swann of Maryland, who sustained and justified the Admirals throughout. The following Resolutions were submitted by him; and wherever this book may be read, I trust he may have the credit of them:—

“*Resolved*, That the forcible arrest and detention of Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, while under the protection of the American flag, was an outrage which demanded prompt reparation.

“2. That Mr. Washburn, in submitting to the insult of President Lopez in his refusal to grant passports to Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, and in separating himself from them in the streets of Asuncion, and leaving them in the hands and at the mercy of the Paraguayan authorities, caused a serious compromise of the American flag, and could not be justified upon any consideration of personal safety; and that Minister Washburn, in justice to his position and the honor of his flag, ought not to have accepted his passport until permitted to withdraw with every member of his Legation.

“3. That in the hostile or unfriendly attitude assumed by Minister Washburn toward Lopez and the Paraguayan government, in his relations and intercourse with the President of that Republic, and in associating Bliss and Masterman with his Legation, (one a British subject, suspected by Lopez of a conspiracy with his enemies and the enemies of his country, both adventurers and of doubtful reputation) Minister Washburn committed a grave act of imprudence, which resulted in most, if not all, of the complications attending his residence in Paraguay.

“4. That Admirals Godon and Davis, in command of the South Atlantic Squadron, have committed no act to subject them to the censure of this government or the investigation of a court-martial; said officers having, to the best of their judgment and understanding, complied with the instructions of the Navy Department, and received its approval.

“5. That no legislation is required on the part of Congress, growing out of the facts stated in this record and the correspondence now on file in the State and Navy Departments.

“6. That this committee be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.” — *Paraguayan Investigation*, pp. xix, xx.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

McMahon presents his Credentials. — His Reception by Lopez. — Mutual Sympathy. — He becomes the Confidant of Madam Lynch. — Lopez makes his Will. — McMahon constituted Custodian and Trustee. — The Blockade broken. — The British Secretary of Legation in Buenos Aires visits Paraguay. — Lopez abandons the Tebicuari and falls back to Angostura. — Battle of Pikysry. — Defeat of the Paraguayans. — Massacre of Prisoners. — Departure of McMahon for Pirébeui. — Sufferings and Misery of the Paraguayan Women and Children. — Lopez's Cabinet Ministers. — Furious Bombardment by the Allies. — Bravery of the Paraguayan Troops. — Cowardly Flight of Lopez. — Lopez's System of Vicarious Punishments. — Dr. Stewart. — Treatment of his Family by Lopez. — Inaction of the Brazilians. — Lopez allowed to fortify himself at the Pass of Ascurra. — Capitulation of Colonel Thompson.

THE two prisoners having been sent to the United States in a manner so satisfactory to Lopez that the incident of their arrest and torture was not likely to disturb the friendly relations "so happily existing between the two governments," Minister McMahon disembarked from the *Wasp*, and presented himself at the headquarters of the Marshal President. Lopez having already learned that he had not come to demand apologies or satisfaction for insults to the late Minister, or for the violation of the flag in the arrest of Bliss and Masterman, was not only predisposed to be affable and conciliatory, but to make a friend of him, if possible. It would not do for him to quarrel with another American Minister, as by his last quarrel he had come very near bringing upon himself a war with the great Republic, and had already brought upon him the general execration of the world. The new Minister did not sustain or approve of the course pursued by the former one, and on this point Lopez, Madam Lynch, and General McMahon were united. Before they met, therefore, they were prepared to be charmed with each other, and at their first



interview McMahon was so gracious as to intimate that Bliss and Masterman had been treated as they deserved to be. The description of this interview is thus related by an eye-witness : —

“The General arrived at head-quarters on the 11th of December, and left the camp on the 23d of the same month. He was invited to dinner by Lopez on the day of his arrival, and I met him at table. We sat opposite to each other, and I had to act as interpreter between the President and him, not on this occasion only, but on several others. The General referred to the reception Masterman and Bliss had met with from Captain Kirkland of the Wasp. He ‘ordered them to be taken forward,’ said McMahon. I give the account in the words of the latter, ‘Take these men forward, and give them into the custody of the master-at-arms’; at which Masterman demurred, observing, ‘I have been lieutenant in her Britannic Majesty’s service.’ To this Captain Kirkland retorted, ‘If you are ladies, and not men, say so,’ and they were sent forward as prisoners. The President listened with undisguised pleasure to this narrative of McMahon’s, and was greatly chagrined and displeased, when General McMahon put the question to me, by my corroborating Masterman’s assertion that he had been an officer in our service. But that which most delighted the President was McMahon’s declaring that Mr. Bliss had applied to him for an interview, and that his answer to this request of a fellow-citizen had been, that when he (McMahon) wanted to see him, he would let him know.” \*

Lopez had now evidently got a Minister after his own heart ; one whose ideas of government were very different from those of his predecessor ; one who doubtless mourned that in the other parts of the world the “age of faith” had passed away, and with it had departed the Inquisition and all its holy appliances. In Paraguay only, in all Christendom, was the government conducted after the manner of Philip II., of Torquemada, and of Alva. Lopez was the pope of Paraguay, in the full exercise of absolute temporal power, and his government that which for ages the Jesuits have been laboring to establish throughout the world. The friendship struck up so suddenly

\* Paraguayan Investigation : testimony of Dr. William Stewart, p. 313.



between the two was not unnatural. Nor was it strange that the same feeling of sympathy had never existed between his predecessor and Lopez as was testified to by McMahon before the Congressional Committee. In alluding to me on one occasion, Lopez remarked to his friend (McMahon was his only friend in Paraguay, save and except Madam Lynch and her children): "I ought to say that ever since Mr. Washburn's arrival in the country he has disliked me. There was a want of congeniality between us. Since his arrival in this country I have never personally liked him, and for that reason always endeavored to treat him officially with the more respect, because I recognized the lack of congeniality." It seems that he found a congenial spirit after I left Paraguay.

I have stated in its proper place, that, soon after the evacuation of Asuncion, and before Lopez had invented his plan of a conspiracy, Madam Lynch sent several large boxes, supposed to contain her most valuable articles, to my house. She then supposed that her paramour was in a trap from which he would never escape alive, and she was naturally anxious to save her ill-gotten wealth. This property was withdrawn when she found that it was Lopez's purpose to make me one of the conspirators, all of whom he had resolved to destroy. Afterwards, when all the people who were supposed to have any money were arrested, their houses searched, and their money and jewels stolen, her stock of valuables was largely increased, and she was more anxious than ever to have it put in some place of security. The boxes that had been in my house were believed by Dr. Stewart to have been buried somewhere between San Fernando and Villeta, but the property which had been stolen was still within the lines of Lopez. Her first thought on the arrival of the new Minister, therefore, was to make him her confidant and aid in securing this blood-money. She was anxious also to secure to herself, in the event of Lopez's death, his estate; but, knowing his suspicious nature, she did not dare to suggest that he should make a will in her favor. The new Minister,



as she informed Dr. Stewart, made the suggestion, but Lopez did not act upon it until after his narrow escape on the 21st of December, when he realized that he was surrounded by a force so largely outnumbering his own that his situation was indeed desperate. The instrument was then drawn up and signed, and duly witnessed by the two British doctors, Stewart and Skinner. The will is dated the 23d of December, 1868. Another paper bearing the same date as the will, constituting McMahon custodian and trustee, was also prepared and signed by Lopez, and a letter particularly requesting him to take charge of Madam Lynch's children. This business having been completed, McMahon left the camp, taking with him the illegitimate progeny of Lopez and his paramour.

The Brazilians having yielded to the demands of General Webb and allowed the Wasp to pass their blockade, other nations insisted on the same privilege ; and three other gunboats — French, English, and Italian — went up to look after their respective countrymen. The English vessel had on board her Britannic Majesty's Secretary of Legation at Buenos Aires, Mr. G. Z. Gould, who, having previously been in Paraguay, thoroughly appreciated the character of Lopez, and did not venture to trust himself again in his power. From the vessel, which remained below the fortifications of Lopez, he sent a letter, advising him that he had come to take away her Majesty's subjects. Lopez invited him to come to his headquarters ; but having been formerly treated with great discourtesy by Lopez, and knowing that he was his bitter enemy, he declined the invitation of the spider to walk into his parlor. He returned to Buenos Aires, and afterwards another gunboat, the Beacon, was sent up, and her commander, Captain Parsons, went to Lopez's head-quarters. Lopez, in answer to previous demands that foreigners should be permitted to go away, had answered that none of them wished to leave, and the complaint had been made that their wishes had never been consulted. Lopez told Captain Parsons that he might go about and talk with all the British subjects, and he would find that none desired to leave. " He had, however," says Colonel



Thompson, "bottled up the few British subjects who were near head-quarters, and only one was allowed to see him, and then only within ear-shot of Lopez. Everything was so arranged as to impress Captain Parsons that he had been allowed to go wherever he wished, and to see everybody he liked. He was allowed to take away Dr. Fox and a dozen English women and children." Lopez took advantage of this opportunity to send away a large number of copies, so far as it was printed, of Bliss's book, which valuable contributions to current history were to be sent to England, that the world might know the truthful history of the great conspiracy, and the character of the great intriguer, the late American Minister.

In permitting me and my family to go away, Lopez was compelled to abandon his purpose of destroying all who might be witnesses against him. The arrival of the *Wasp* had been most untimely for his plans; as after my exposition of his character and acts, though he were to kill all the other witnesses, no amount of testimony previously extorted by torture would be credited, but all would be taken rather as proof of his inhuman practices. A dozen women and children were taken away on the *Beacon*, and afterwards about fifty more were allowed to go away on the Italian gunboat. That they were able to do so they have to thank the American Minister at Rio, James Watson Webb; as but for his action in sending the *Wasp* above the squadron it is not probable that one of them would ever have left Paraguay alive.

By this time the tide of war was setting strongly in favor of the allies. They had come upon Lopez with overwhelming numbers; but instead of pursuing their previous chivalric mode of fighting, which permitted Lopez to retire whenever he got ready, taking with him all his arms, guns, and stores, they adopted a plan that if vigorously carried out would have ended the war two years before. I have already said, that, with an energetic commander, a corduroy road could have been made through the Gran Chaco from the Tres Bocas to a



point opposite Pilar or San Fernando in less than thirty days, and with less loss of life than was caused in the same time by the miasma of the swamps in which the army was encamped. But months and years were allowed to pass, and it was only in December, 1868, four years after the war had commenced, that it occurred to Caxias that he would send his army across the river and thence a few leagues higher up, and from there cross back and prevent Lopez from repeating the manoeuvre he had tried successfully so many times before. The whole allied army, therefore, of thirty-two thousand men, was passed over the river, and while Lopez was yet incredulous, refusing to give Caxias credit for so sensible an act, he learned that the enemy was preparing to attack him from above, where there were no intrenchments. Lopez saw his danger, and began to make trenches on that side. His head-quarters, which he had located at a safe distance from harm in case of attack from the front, would be exposed in case of assault from the other side. This new trench, at some points of which he was sure to be attacked, had so great a radius, says Colonel Thompson, in order that Lopez's house might be out of rifle range, that it was thinly defended in front, notwithstanding Lopez had his whole army along its inner line. Says Thompson: "There was not time to dig this ditch all round, and the rear towards Cerro Leon was completely open, and had no men to defend it. This, however, did not signify with a general like Caxias, who was certain to find out which was the strong side and attack it." Thus the incapacity of one offset the cowardice of the other.

The allied army, having passed above, had taken a position near Villeta, north of Angostura, to which point Lopez had fallen back after the abandonment of the Tebicuari to make another stand against the advance of the allies. It was at this pass in the river that Sebastian Cabot had been attacked by the Payagua Indians in 1526, and from the natural configuration of the country the point was admirably adapted for defensive operations. The guns of Lopez were so placed that they commanded a long curve in the river, so that from the



instant an ascending vessel came in sight until it should get some distance above it was exposed to a formidable battery. Just below, a small river, or *riacho*, that leads from the Lake Ipoá, falls into the Paraguay. Near the confluence it is very deep, and some twenty yards across. For about two leagues to the south the ground is very wet and marshy, and covered with woods that are almost impenetrable. The position from that side was therefore almost invulnerable; and until Lopez learned that the allies had got in his rear by way of the Chaco he supposed he could hold them at bay for a good while longer. It was next to impossible for them to flank him on his left, and as his enemies, during a war of four years, had never availed themselves of the only feasible way of attacking him, he did not suppose that so sensible an idea would ever occur to them.

The allied army being to the north of the Paraguayan, the impending battle promised to be decisive. The Brazilians outnumbered the Paraguayans as three or four to one, and, if defeated, would be in an enemy's country with no way of retreat; and should victory once more rest on their banners, Lopez and his army could not again escape or fall back, for the country in his rear was but a series of streams, swamps, and jungles, such as had often served him in better stead than trenches or cannon. The head-quarters of Lopez were at Cumbarity, a hill that overlooked the surrounding country for several leagues, and distant some four miles from Angostura. The country between the head-quarters and the *riacho* Pikysyry is known by the name of the stream.

It has not been my purpose to describe the battles of this war. Colonel Thompson, in his military history of the events in which he took part, has given a full account of these last battles near the river; and General McMahon, who was an eye-witness of some of the most important of them, has given to the world an account of what he saw.\* As my knowledge of these events is derived from their descriptions, which to

✓ \* The War in Paraguay. By General M. T. McMahon. Harper's Magazine, April, 1870.



some extent conflict, — I shall content myself with giving little more than general results. The Brazilians seemed to realize in this battle that they had the enemy completely in their power ; and had the skill and dash of the officers been equal to the courage of the soldiers, the war would have ended with the battle of Pikysyry. The lines of Lopez were furiously attacked at different points, and his whole army was engaged, save only his staff and a hundred or two other mounted men, that he kept as a sort of body-guard near his own person. His house was not in the line with any of the points attacked ; though, hemmed in as he was, more or less chance shot fell in that direction. With characteristic prudence, Lopez took a position on horseback behind the walls of his adobe house, ready to run at a moment's notice in case the enemy were to cut their way through his lines and render his post unsafe. Dr. Stewart, who was near him all this time, says he exhibited the greatest fear, though, for his part, he did not realize that there was at any time the least danger where he was, notwithstanding he did not seek the shelter of the mud walls. It was, however, the first time that Lopez had been under fire since the war began ; and Madam Lynch was afterwards at great pains to impress it on all that he had exposed himself with reckless valor ; that one bullet had passed through his whiskers, and another between his legs. Though the Paraguayans held their own in front, fighting with the greatest valor, and as if for liberty rather than for their own perpetual enslavement, a new danger appeared from another direction. A large cavalry force had moved along under cover of woods and ravines to the extreme right of Lopez's lines, from where all the troops had been withdrawn to support other positions, and came with scarcely any opposition to within some thirty rods of the head-quarters. Lopez had but a mere handful to oppose them, and had they deployed they would have been masters of the field, and he must have been killed or captured at that time. But that fatality which had marked the Paraguayan people for destruction had not yet been so completely fulfilled as to then remove the author of all their



miseries. Hundreds of thousands were yet to die before the curtain should fall on the last scene of the tragedy. The advance of this body of cavalry is thus described by McMahon:—

“They came also in column, and advanced until within eighty yards of the head-quarters. The staff of the President and irregular horsemen, to the number of perhaps two hundred in all, dashed against them and clustered like bees around the head of the column, using their weapons—sabres, carbines, or lances—with terrible effect. Had the Brazilians deployed, they would have ingulfed the little handful of men resisting them, captured the Paraguayan head-quarters, and probably Lopez himself. Yet they still advanced in column,—more slowly at every step,—but the weight from behind still pressing the whole column forward. Meanwhile those in front seemed to make no fight at all, while the Paraguayans were striking on all sides with singular rapidity, although still pressed back and moving with the mass. The pace had decreased to a walk. The Paraguayan officers, with their red blouses, were confusedly mingled with the leading ranks of the white-capped Brazilians. The latter seemed half paralyzed, but still moved forward, pressing back the Paraguayan horses, which gave ground sidewise or by backing. At last the forward motion ceased, the column recoiled upon itself, turned, and retreated. The others followed with fierce enthusiasm. A section of artillery opened on the retreating enemy, and the allied cavalry did not appear again in that day’s battle. The day closed with the complete repulse of the assailants at all important points, although it was evident that the Paraguayan line of defence must be still further contracted, in view of the heavy losses among the defenders. The enemy maintained their musketry fire all night long, and for five days and nights succeeding. They knew the scarcity in numbers of their adversaries, and they hoped to exhaust their enemy by giving him no rest.

“The condition of things within Lopez’s lines that night and the following days was deplorable. There were no means of caring for the wounded in such numbers, nor could men be spared to bring them off the field, or to bury the dead. Many children, almost unnoticed, were lying around under the corridors, grievously wounded, and silently waiting for death. Women were busy making lint, by the light of lanterns, from whatever material could be collected for



that purpose. Garments of all descriptions were torn into bandages. Groups of officers, many of them wounded, were sitting here and there, discussing the events of the day. The President sat apart with a few of his chief officers, similarly occupied."

Lopez, on arriving at Pikysry, was encumbered by those prisoners whom he had brought from the Tebicuari, and whom he still kept alive for the pleasure of torturing and prolonging their misery. The prisoners of war, and those Paraguayans who were not regarded with any particular hate, were humanely butchered at San Fernando, before it was abandoned. Those, however, who had been accused of conspiracy, were kept alive, as long as possible, for no other object than that Lopez might indulge in his love of inflicting pain. On the morning of the 21st of December, the day of the battle before described, he saw that he could no longer indulge in his favorite pastime without running the risk of having his victims fall into the hands of the enemy. These prisoners were all confined in a retired place; and one of them, who subsequently escaped, thus relates the incident of the execution of his companions:—

"On the 21st of December we were (about forty of us) prisoners, lying in a retired place in the wood, when the allied army began to make a formal attack on the Paraguayan fortifications in Las Lomas. Early in the morning there came a body of officers and priests to our place, and Commander Marco read a list of about one third of the prisoners, who had to step forth, and by everything it was evident that then was the solemn moment of what the Paraguayans venture to name an execution of justice. Then the called prisoners formed a circle, Commandante Marco read a short sentence, the priests took them to confession, a body of soldiers took them a few steps into the thicket of the wood, another pause of silence, and a musket volley finished all. It will interest you, dear sir, but deeply afflict you, to know the names of some of the persons of that day's execution. There were among them Don Benigno Lopez, the brother of the President; Barrios, the brother-in-law; the Minister Berges; the bishop; the Portuguese Consul, Leite Pereira; Colonel Alén; Captain Fidanza; the very old mother and the wife of Colonel



Martinez ; and the priest Bogado. We also had as companion-prisoners the sisters of the President and the other brother, Colonel Venancio Lopez. These were taken and shut up, each one in a cart, and carried off, I do not know where. People speak here of their also being shot, but I could not assure the truth of it."\*

The remaining prisoners of this group were left in confinement, all of them being either in fetters or in the stocks, and under a guard whose orders were to kill their prisoners should the enemy come so near as to threaten their capture, or, rather, release. On the 24th, being the fourth day of the battle, Lopez and his staff, including Madam Lynch, chanced to pass so near them that the latter observed the long line of miserable wretches who, ever since their arrival, had been kept there in a state of almost absolute nakedness, lying on the bare ground that was soaking wet from the frequent rains. She called the President's attention to them, and suggested that as it was the anniversary of the national independence he should signalize it by ordering these prisoners to be set at liberty. He complied so far as to order them to be released from their fetters and the stocks, though they were still held as prisoners with a guard over them. Three days after this the Paraguayans were completely routed, and then Treuenfeld and Taylor, a Prussian officer by the name of Von Versen, and several others, managed to escape into the woods and conceal themselves until they could surrender themselves to the allies, after which their troubles were at an end. One of the last acts of Lopez, when he saw that the field was lost, was to send an adjutant to make sure, by cutting their throats, that none of them escaped. "But," says Treuenfeld, "we fortunately had hooked it already, and all I know is that the adjutant, with his list, is taken prisoner by the Brazilians ; so I escaped a second condemnation to death."

In his description of the events of this day, General McMahon makes no allusion to the butchery of the prisoners. He was not a witness of it ; and as he had not been long in

\* Paraguayan Investigation : letter from R. von Fischer Treuenfeld to the Author, p. 25.



Paraguay, it was but natural that he should be incredulous when told by others that his good friend, who was all the while treating him with such attention that they soon became ardent admirers of each other, was engaged, at the very time, in acts of barbarity never before paralleled in the history of the world.

Thus invested with the high and responsible office of guardian of the progeny of Lopez's imported mistress, the American Minister set out for the new capital. The road through which he was to pass was as bad as could be, and was lined by the wounded, who were dragging themselves away from the battlefield towards the old camp of Cerro Leon, and the women and children, who had been ordered to the interior from Pikysry to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. These poor wretches were half-naked, emaciated skeletons, and yet not a sigh or complaint was ever heard against the tyrant that was thus driving them to the mountains. They had long before learned that to repine was a crime, to be punished with death. Lopez had threatened, but a few months before, that, if he were forced back from the river, he would drive every man, woman, and child before him. He had told me, nearly two years before, that sooner than yield he would prolong the war till not a man was left. He was now carrying out his threats.

The capital was now at Pirébebui, a little town, or capilla, some fifteen leagues to the east of Asuncion, and beyond the first range of hills or cordilleras east of the Paraguay; and to this point the American Minister, with his precious charge, made way. Here Lopez still pretended to have his seat of government. The old Vice-President Sanchez had finally been forgiven for his delinquencies at the time the ironclads passed Humaita, and was then at Pirébebui, and Lopez, though he had killed off all his former ministers, still kept up the fiction of a Cabinet; but General McMahon, when he speaks of "the residences of the Cabinet ministers," omits to give the names of those functionaries, or to tell us whether any of them were prisoners while he was there, or subjected to the *cepo uruguayana*. All their predecessors had been so dealt



with, and afterwards executed, save only one, the treasurer, and he expired under the torture.

The wounded and the superfluous women and children having been driven out of the camp and towards the cordilleras, Lopez still held out for several days longer. After his narrow escape of the 21st, he had a secret road, or path, looked out, so that he himself might run away, though everybody else were to perish. Madam Lynch remained with him, for she had been from the first the Lady Macbeth to incite him to his barbarities and to keep him from deserting his post.

On the 25th the allies began a furious bombardment at different points, and they caused such havoc that Lopez's force was reduced to less than one thousand men. This did not include the troops under command of Thompson, at Angostura. The Brazilians had lost more than one third of the army that had passed through the Chaco. But from their style of fighting on this occasion it was clear that they meant this for their last battle. On the 26th the fighting was not so desperate; but on the 27th it was renewed with such fury that the Paraguayans could make scarcely any resistance, and the allies marched in and held the field. There were few prisoners taken, for the Paraguayans had fought till they were nearly all killed.

Lopez, as soon as he saw that his few remaining troops could not longer keep back the allies, skulked off, as he had always done before, when he found it necessary to retreat. While his officers were fighting like tigers, leading the remnants of their forces against ten times their number, and while individuals would rush against battalions, striking right and left, till cut down, refusing to surrender, Lopez was improving his time to run away by the path he had before prepared, but of which he had kept them in ignorance. He went away so suddenly that even Madam Lynch did not know when he went, or by which road. She rushed frantically about the field, inquiring what had become of the President. Dr. Stewart, who had seen him start, pointed in the direction he had taken, and away she went, being followed by Generals



Resquin, Caballero, and about sixty of the cavalry. The little force of mounted men was the only party, on the whole battle-field, that escaped. Individuals in the different parts of the field crawled away when the fight was over, and made their way after the fugitive Marshal. That any should try to return to his service, when they might escape, may seem incredible to those unfamiliar with his system of vicarious punishment. Lopez having run away without giving any orders to those he abandoned, with any other soldiers the most natural cry would have been, *sauve qui peut*; but the Paraguayans knew that, as their chief had fled, his first act of vengeance would be on the families of those who surrendered. The surgeon-general, Dr. Stewart, who had remained at his post attending to the wounded after Lopez, Madam Lynch, and the principal officers had escaped, seeing the field was lost, undertook to follow them, for he had a wife and children still in the tyrant's power. But suddenly finding himself surrounded and escape impossible he surrendered, and was, so soon as Lopez knew that he had not been killed, denounced as a traitor and deserter, and his wife, who was finally rescued, was for several weeks kept a close prisoner, treated with the most cruel indignities, and nearly starved to death. One of her children died while she was thus held as a prisoner; and it was only by the sudden advance of the allies, some six months afterwards, that she escaped the fate of nearly all her countrywomen, — death by starvation or the lance.

When Lopez saw that the allies were moving on his headquarters, he fled so precipitately that all his baggage, his fine clothes, and his papers, were captured. Among the latter was found the diary of General Resquin, which contained a list of the political prisoners who had been put to death at different times, and from which I have so often quoted in this work. He evidently had been greatly surprised by being driven out so suddenly; for among these papers was found the will and the letter of trusteeship to General McMahon, or a copy of them. It is presumed that the originals were in the possession of McMahon, and that but for the capture of these papers



the world would never have known of the affection that so suddenly sprung up between Lopez and Lynch and the new American Minister, and of the plan or conspiracy for saving the property that had been stolen from countless murdered victims.

During the whole war Lopez had never, before these battles at Pikysyry, been under fire ; "and then," says Thompson, "he can hardly be said to have been so, as he was always either out of range or protected by the thick mud wall of his house. During the last days he repeatedly swore to the troops that he would stay and conquer, or die with them there. On his going away, therefore, almost without smelling powder, the men, though so well trained as to think everything he did as perfectly right, yet felt disgusted with him, and I have heard many of them who were taken prisoners descant upon his cowardice."

In his flight Lopez made for the old camping-ground of Cerro Leon. It was here that he had gathered his army after the general conscription in 1864, but eight months before the war was commenced. Extensive barracks for sixty thousand men were erected at that time, and after the war commenced these were used, so far as they were required, for hospital purposes. A few reserves, consisting of convalescents and boys, were here up to the time when Lopez saw that he was to be attacked in the rear, and then they were all called in to join the main army. The place was entirely exposed, and had Caxias ordered pursuit immediately after the flight the war must then have ended. He had, at that very moment, eight thousand finely mounted cavalry, with nothing whatever for them to do ; and had a small body been sent in pursuit of Lopez and his little party, who were fleeing on their jaded and ill-fed horses, they would have easily overtaken the fugitives, and killed or captured every one of them. Even had Lopez reached Cerro Leon he had no men to defend it, and the stragglers who were following after to join him could never have reached him.

But the fatal infirmity and imbecility of the Brazilian gen-



erals still clung to them, and gave Lopez a new lease of power to exterminate his own people. Caxias gave no orders for pursuit; and so Lopez was left in peace to gather up the shattered remnants of his army, to collect from different points such artillery, small arms, and ammunition as he could still lay hold of, and to retire to a natural fortress in the mountains, there again to bid defiance to the invaders. To take advantage of a victory was what no commander-in-chief of the allies could ever do. Their peculiar chivalry forbade them to crowd upon or distress a prostrate or fleeing enemy; and Caxias, seeing that the Paraguayan army was dispersed, that Lopez himself had fled with only about a hundred men, declared that the war was over. Without waiting for orders from home, he left his command and returned to Rio, expecting, like Barroso, Tamandaré and others who had disgraced their country and cause, to be promoted, enriched, and more highly honored by the Emperor. And such were the Emperor's first intentions towards him. But before the Marques had been created a Duque, the Emperor had the mortification of learning that Lopez was strongly intrenched at the Pass of Ascurra, in the cordilleras, and that the Empire must prepare for another campaign. Poor Caxias was therefore allowed to retire on his laurels before won, and was never again to be spoken of but in bitterness and contempt.

Though Lopez had fled from Pikysyry, Thompson still held his ground at Angostura; and though outnumbered by at least five to one, he gallantly maintained himself till he learned that the army at Pikysyry had been completely routed. To hold out any longer was to expose his men to useless slaughter. His situation was somewhat like that of Martinez after the evacuation of Humaita. But, fortunately for Thompson, he had no wife in the country, on whom Lopez and Lynch could exercise their ingenuity in torture. Calling his officers around him, he told them of their situation, and asked them if it were not better to capitulate rather than fight till all were killed. They had but very little ammunition left, yet they could doubtless do much



injury to the enemy if they would never surrender. Should they fight till the last man was killed, or should they capitulate? With one exception, all answered, capitulate; and on the 30th of December, the terms of surrender having been agreed upon, the whole force, consisting of twenty-four hundred persons, of whom five hundred were women and four hundred wounded, marched out as prisoners of war.



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Count d'Eu takes Command of the Brazilian Army. — Lopez at the Pass of Ascurra. — The Paraguayan Women and Children driven before the Army. — Their Condition one of Appalling Wretchedness. — General McMahon at Pirébeui. — He is recalled. — His Departure from Paraguay. — Reception in Buenos Aires. — Burlesque Procession. — He endeavors to interest the United States in Behalf of Lopez. — Closing Events of the War. — Statement of General Resquin. — Capture of Pirébeui by the Brazilians. — Retreat of the Paraguayan Army. — More Conspiracies. — Execution of the Alleged Conspirators. — The Mother, Sisters, and Brother of Lopez accused of conspiring against him. — Execution of Venancio Lopez. — Statement of Doña Inocencia.

WHEN the Emperor learned that, notwithstanding the disastrous defeat and rout of the Paraguayans at Pikysyry, Lopez was organizing for another defence, and had intrenched himself at a point stronger than he had ever held before, he realized the fact, which had been patent to everybody else for a long time, that if the war was ever to terminate in accordance with the terms of the Triple Alliance, he must intrust the command of his armies to some one not a Brazilian. He had seen repeatedly that a Brazilian commander-in-chief would never follow up a success; that a victory of his troops was always a drawn battle in its results, from the inability of his generals to improve their advantage. His troops, ever since the invasion of Paraguay, had vastly outnumbered those of Lopez; and on numerous occasions, after desperate fighting, with perhaps equal losses on both sides, where by sheer force of numbers the Paraguayans had been overborne, he learned that instead of pressing on, and not allowing Lopez to collect together his forces again, he had permitted him to retreat and take with him all his troops who were not killed or prisoners, and nearly all his cannon, ammunition,



and small arms. He therefore reluctantly and unwillingly assented to the desire expressed long before by his son-in-law, the Count d'Eu, who had married the Princess Imperial, to take command of his army.

This young officer, the son of the Duke de Nemours, and grandson of Louis Philippe, had married the Princess Imperial in the year 1864; and having had a military education and showing a decided taste for military life, had long desired to be put in command of the army. But his request was not acceded to until after the return of Caxais, who had come back with a great flourish of trumpets, claiming that the war was over, and that Lopez had been routed and was a fugitive and wanderer among the mountains, impotent for further harm. Great was the mortification of his Majesty, therefore, when he learned soon after that Caxias, through his utter incompetency, had allowed Lopez to escape when he might easily have captured him. He then resolved to send the Count d'Eu to finish up the war.

On the arrival of the new commander-in-chief at Asuncion, — which, soon after the battle of Pikysyry, was captured and made the head-quarters, — he entered upon the campaign in a manner which clearly showed that he would not repeat the errors of his predecessors. Lopez, having remained long enough at Cerro Leon to gather in the stragglers, and to collect all arms that had not fallen into the possession of the allies, started for the Pass of Ascurra in the cordilleras, which he proceeded to fortify. He made good his threat of driving all non-combatants before him; and at that time it may be presumed, though the reliable data on which to base an opinion are very scanty, that there were some three hundred thousand people left alive in Paraguay, of which number two hundred and seventy-five thousand were women and children. All the boys above nine or ten years old had been taken for soldiers, and therefore nearly all of the remainder were females; and as during the war the inhabitants from the southern part of the state had been driven northward as the army had been forced back, and all between Asuncion and the scene of the late



battles were upon territory which was likely to be invaded by the enemy, nearly half of the women left in the country were to be driven before the fugitive remnants of the defeated army. Lopez's orders, as he retreated, were that no Paraguayans should be left to fall into the hands of the allies ; and parties were sent in all directions to drive in and keep in front the women and children that were scattered through the country. To do this required more troops than Lopez could spare ; therefore the scouting-parties, when they found a crowd of women and children too numerous for them to drive into the interior before being overtaken by the allies, indiscriminately slaughtered them. There was little of this butchery at first, for the reason that the Brazilians, previous to the arrival of Count d'Eu, made scarcely any pursuit until the whole population had been driven into the mountains, and in the rear of Lopez's new camp at Ascurra. These people had scarcely anything to eat, except what they could pick up in the woods and deserted country. The wild oranges, and a nut that is produced in great abundance by a sort of palm-tree, was about all the poor wretches had to eat. Seldom in the history of the world has such misery and suffering been endured as by these helpless women and children. Many of them were forced to the severest kind of drudgery, while all of them were driven about through the wilderness, exposed by day to the scorching rays of the sun, with no shelter at night, and with only such food as the forests afforded. Thousands and tens of thousands of them died of actual starvation ; and weeks afterwards, when the allies, who were preparing for another advance, sent out their scouting-parties, they would not unfrequently surprise small bodies of Paraguayans holding guard over large numbers of these unhappy wretches. If the guard were not strong enough or numerous enough to drive the fugitives all before them in their retreat, the rule was to cut their throats ; and when the allies came up, they found nothing but the mutilated bodies left unburied on the plains and in the forests. Lopez had said he would leave none behind him ; that, if he must fall, no Paraguayan should



survive him ; and he was carrying out his threats in this manner. He could have no other object than a desire of seeing his people exterminated before he should himself fall. These women and children were of no advantage to him ; on the contrary, many of his troops were required to guard them, and prevent them from escaping or from being taken prisoners ; and were they to be taken by the enemy, they could be of no service to them, but would rather be an encumbrance and hindrance to their movements.

In spite, however, of all he could do to prevent it, a great many of these women and children fell behind and were taken prisoners. According to the descriptions that have been given of them, their condition was uniformly one of appalling wretchedness. They were all mere walking skeletons. The most of them were nearly destitute of clothing, and many were entirely so. They appeared to have lost all hope and all sensibility ; to care for nothing and think of nothing but to get something to appease their terrible hunger. No sense of shame or modesty was left to them ; and when taken prisoners all feeling of hope was so utterly extinguished, and they had been so long taught that the misery they had suffered was nothing compared with what they would suffer should they fall into the hands of the enemy, that they welcomed their captors rather as executioners than as deliverers.

While Lopez was gathering his forces at Ascurra, fortifying as much as possible, and waiting for the allies to again attack him, General McMahon was at the new camp of Piré-bebui. This place was some three leagues in the rear of Ascurra, and immense numbers of the poor women and children who had been driven from their homes to the interior were in the town and vicinity. The destitution among them was terrible. Starvation was written in every face, and death was making fearful havoc among them. The Minister, however, was treated with distinguished consideration, and was enabled to obtain all that was necessary for comfort, if not for luxury. But the sight of the misery around him was appalling. Two English engineers, Valpy and Burrill, were his companions at



this time ; and the representations which they have made since their escape, of the misery of which they were the unwilling witnesses, are such as to cause them to curse more bitterly than ever before the author of all this suffering. People were dying of starvation all around them, and not unfrequently in the morning, when the doors of the Legation were opened, the corpses of dead women, who had expired in the night from actual starvation, would be seen at or near the door. Minister McMahon was greatly astonished at this evidence of patriotism and devotion to the great Lopez, and has ever since ascribed, not only their submission, but their endurance and patience under the trials to which they were exposed, to their love and affection for his Excellency.

But General McMahon was not to remain long in Paraguay. He had gone there and presented his credentials, notwithstanding the gross insult to the flag and indignity to his predecessor committed by Lopez, before his government had time to give him such instructions as the changed circumstances required. After that no communications were allowed to pass the military lines of the allies for months, and he received nothing from his government until his naval friends at the mouth of the river becoming anxious lest Lopez should treat him as he had treated nearly every foreigner in the country, including several consuls, Admiral Davis sent his son and his fleet-captain, Ramsey, through with family letters, to learn something of his whereabouts and condition. These bearers of despatches were received at the head-quarters, where they met General McMahon, and were treated with immense distinction. From them Lopez received the gratifying intelligence that Bliss and Masterman had been sent for trial to the United States, and that the former American Minister, whom he had accused of being in league with the allies, and the champion of their cause, had, on leaving Paraguay, been assailed by a whirlwind of newspaper abuse. It is presumed they did not tell him that the burden of that abuse was the fact, that, at his departure from Paraguay, he had left Bliss and Masterman to the



mercies of a tyrant unparalleled in history for his horrible cruelties.

They returned to Buenos Aires greatly charmed with Lopez and Madam Lynch. The latter had entertained them with regal magnificence, notwithstanding the fact that around them, all through the country, wherever the power of Lopez extended, women and children were dying daily by thousands. Lopez, in his controversy with me, had apparently gained his point. I had not been sustained apparently either by the people or by the government of the United States, while the course of McMahon was approved, and poor Bliss and Masterman were to be tried on their own confessions. But within a few months the face of things was changed, and with the first despatches that McMahon received from his government, after it had been informed of the treatment of his predecessor by Lopez, was his letter of recall ; and at the same time came the information that the Admiral and his officers who had received Bliss and Masterman as prisoners, treated them like felons, and sent them to the United States to be tried, had been ordered home to appear before a committee which had been ordered by Congress to investigate their very singular conduct.

McMahon, however, did not leave his friends until about four weeks after he received his letter of recall. That last month he spent at the head-quarters, and when ready to depart he had a very large quantity of baggage to take away with him. Among other things there were eleven tercios of the yerba maté, and also a great number of boxes and packages, besides the trunks supposed to contain his personal baggage which he had taken into Paraguay. On reaching the lines of the Brazilians, they provided him with the means of transporting these rewards of industry to Asuncion, where he remained for several days ; thence he took passage in a merchant steamer for Buenos Aires, where the greatest curiosity was felt to know what these boxes from the camp of Lopez contained, and whether the yerba maté in the tercios was solid, or merely used as packing for ounces



and the jewelry that had been stolen from the murdered victims of Lopez and Madam Lynch. He was, nevertheless, allowed to take everything away with him when he left the Plata for France, whither he took passage after a brief delay in Buenos Aires. If the press and the people of Buenos Aires had evinced an unfriendly feeling towards me on my arrival from Paraguay, yet my reception was cordial and flattering compared with that which was accorded to my successor. The fact that he had been made the trustee of Lopez and the guardian of his children provoked the most bitter sarcasm, and a burlesque procession paraded through the streets, in which the American Minister, the friend of Lopez, was represented dressed in woman's clothes, in a carriage with several unkempt and unwashed urchins.

On reaching Asuncion, McMahon represented the position of Lopez as very strong, and that he could maintain himself where he was for an indefinite length of time, as he was lacking for nothing essential to the support of his army. Provisions were abundant, and the Paraguayans were enthusiastic in their devotion to Lopez, and in their faith that they would yet conquer. As the allies, of course, could not doubt the words of an American Minister, they were somewhat perplexed to reconcile these statements with the fact that all the prisoners that came in, all the women and children who were rescued, — and at this time they were coming in daily in considerable numbers, — were almost in a state of starvation, and that they were but mere skeletons, many of them in a state of absolute nudity, and all of them reporting that they had had nothing to eat for weeks except what they could gather in the woods, in common with the beasts and the birds.

The recall of McMahon by the United States government was not, however, entirely distasteful to Lopez, as he cherished the idea, that, on the return of his friend to his adopted country, he would be able to procure the intervention of the United States in his behalf; and that, with so good an advocate to plead his cause with the government of the great



Republic, he might yet come out victorious from the war. What encouragement McMahon gave him to prolong the war and continue the sacrifice of his people until the United States might have time to act in his behalf has only been made public through Madam Lynch, and therefore there is no reliable evidence in regard to it. It is known, however, that McMahon, on his return to the United States, most earnestly advocated the cause of Lopez, and urged on the government the duty of sending out another minister, and taking immediate measures to put a stop to the war. Before the Investigating Committee he defended the cause of Lopez with a zeal worthy of an advocate, and told the committee that he was contending for the principles of republican independence in Paraguay, and that the most direful consequences would result to the cause of republicanism if Lopez were to be overborne. He also represented Lopez to be very strong, and holding then a position almost impregnable, and that, if driven from there, he could fall back to other points equally strong; that he had already taken heed, by ordering the planting of extensive crops, that for the future there should be no lack of provisions. But neither the committee nor the President could see that it was the duty of the United States to intervene in behalf of such a monster and tyrant as everybody who had escaped from Paraguay, except McMahon, declared Lopez to be; and unfortunately, not long after, he was driven out with great loss from Ascurra, and from that time was but a fugitive in the mountains.

From the time that Lopez was driven from Ascurra until his death, the information that I have been able to obtain in regard to the closing events of his career has been fragmentary, and some parts of it are not entirely reliable. I have been obliged to depend upon the reports of the Brazilian officers, and on the statements of such Paraguayans as afterwards escaped alive, and on a few private letters which I have received from persons who were with him to the last. I have been unable to converse with any of the witnesses of the last scenes of the tragedy, or to sift the evidence which I have col-



lected ; therefore I shall only give a very brief, and doubtless imperfect, summary of the closing events of the war.

The only succinct and intelligible statement of the progress of the war, after the defeat of Lopez at Pikysry, that I have seen, is contained in the statement of General Resquin, made by him after the death of Lopez, and while he was a prisoner. From that disastrous field, Lopez, according to Resquin, fled, accompanied by only sixty men. At a distance of six or seven leagues from the scene of the battle he met a force of seven hundred of his own troops, who were on the way from Cerro Leon to be incorporated with his army at Pikysry. Leaving a part of this force to check any small party that might be sent in pursuit, he continued his flight to Cerro Leon, where he made a short stay, and then hurried on to Ascurra. Here he began to gather again the remnants of his army, — the soldiers who had escaped from the late battles, besides those who had been left to guard various points which it was not necessary to defend after the capture of Pikysry. From this stronghold he sent out to make another conscription of old men and boys who up to that time had not been in the army ; and with these additions, and also a great number of the wounded that had partially recovered in the hospitals, his force, according to Resquin, even at that time, amounted to thirteen thousand men. Immediately after the flight from Pikysry all was confusion. There was no one to command, and no one to obey. In the midst of this confusion it appears that the carts containing the money from the treasury were lost. This caused the greatest consternation among the principal officials. Says Resquin : “ The Minister Caminos accused the Minister Gonzalez, the Minister Gonzalez accused the Minister Falcon, they all accused the Vice-President, and Lopez, in his turn, confounded them all because of the disappearance of the treasure.”

Several months before, a foundry had been established at a village called Caacupé ; and the casting of small cannon was commenced and prosecuted with such energy that before Lopez



left Ascurra they had cast eighteen pieces of artillery. Two of them were of iron, and sixteen of brass. He had also collected all the artillery from Asuncion, from Cerro Leon, and from other points not in the possession of the allies. Here Lopez waited, expecting to be attacked, the position affording him such advantages that his few troops could repulse ten times their number. Count d'Eu, however, did not choose to attack him this time, as Caxias had usually done, at that point where he was the strongest, but proceeded to flank him and to capture the various towns around him, including Pirébebui, the late capital. On the day that Pirébebui was taken, says Resquin, "Lopez knew, by means of some troops that he had in the woods, that the Brazilian Army had entered into that village, but he concealed the news, announcing that the allies had been defeated ; and, in order to solemnize such a happy victory, he commanded them to celebrate a *Te Deum*. Lopez and all the Ministers, besides many people of the army, assisted at this festivity. Lopez showed himself very well satisfied, and received the compliments of all. In the mean while none of the defenders of Pirébebui, who amounted to two thousand and odd men, appeared at Ascurra. On the following morning, Lopez told Resquin and the persons of the higher grade of the army that he had been deceived, that Pirébebui had been taken by the Brazilians, and that in the evening the army would move, telling them to keep it a secret. The force that was in Ascurra amounted to ten thousand and odd men, besides eighteen hundred sick. On the evening of the 13th of August, 1869, the Paraguayan army commenced its march. It was divided into two corps, the first of which consisted of five thousand men, under the immediate orders of Lopez, who was accompanied also by Resquin. The first corps marched all that night, the next day and the next night, and even the succeeding day, scarcely a moment's rest being allowed. Leaving Ascurra on the night of the 13th, and thus travelling without rest, the army, almost dead from exhaustion, arrived at Curuguayti on the 16th. The second corps, which had most of the artillery and all the other



heavy objects that must be transported, was attacked by a Brazilian force on the 16th, and completely defeated. It lost not only its artillery, but the principal part of the army, provisions, archives, etc. No part of this whole corps was ever united again with the rest of the army, with the exception of the general in command, Caballero, and five men, all of them on foot, who succeeded in escaping through the woods. After reaching Curuguayti, Lopez detached from his little army a force of nine hundred men, with artillery, under the command of General Caballero, who guarded the mouth of the pass that led to that opening. This party was completely defeated on the 18th of August, when the Brazilians attacked and took that place." The army started again on the 18th, and reached the banks of the river Estanislao on the 25th. "During this march," says Resquin, "many women and children died, the soldiers often losing their way, since the road was heavy, and they made scarcely any halt to sleep or eat."

At this time it appears that Lopez suspected another conspiracy ; and he immediately commenced in his customary manner to ascertain the correctness of his suspicions. By reason of some mysterious circumstances, a man and a woman had been made prisoners near Curuguayti ; the man, a Paraguayan, escaped, but the woman was brought to the head-quarters of Lopez at Estanislao. The sergeant in command of the outskirts was shot for having allowed the man to escape ; and the woman was examined according to Lopez's favorite method for finding out the truth. "She confessed," continues Resquin, "that her companion was a spy of the allies, and that he had an understanding with an ensign, one of Lopez's escort by the name of Aquino, with whom he had previously arranged, while the army was at Ascurra, that, with a part of the escort of Lopez himself, he would rise and assassinate the President. She further said, that, after the Paraguayan Army left Ascurra, he received notices, by means of Aquino, which he transmitted to the Brazilians, who had been met near Curuguayti, and that he had given information to the Brazilians of all he had seen. Aquino, brought face to face with the woman, denied all at



first, but afterwards, having been punished with blows and the *cepo*, confessed to Lopez himself, saying that it was not he whom he wished to destroy, but the country. Lopez on this occasion ordered that he should be given something to eat and drink. Then Aquino denounced some others as his accomplices, these in turn denounced others, so at one blow were executed eighty-six individuals of the troop and sixteen officials, among them Colonel Mongilo, commandante of the escort, and Major Rivero, its second, not because they had taken part in the conspiracy, but because such a plot had been concocted in the corps under their command without having been discovered by them. The other officials, before being shot, were flogged in the sight of Lopez until they were about to expire."

On the 12th of September, the army left San Estanislao and moved in the direction of Igatimy. On the way a halt of six days was made, in order to make further investigation relative to the conspiracy of Ascurra. Here sixty more men were shot, and among them Aquino. Resquin himself, as he declares, and the other principal officers, were in a state of the greatest anxiety from the fear of being executed at any moment, without any reason being given for it, because, as he says, "Lopez was a monster, and so entirely disregarded the lives of those next to him, that for no reason whatever he would order his most faithful followers to be killed." In Curugwayti another conspiracy was discovered; and of all these alleged conspiracies which were devised by Lopez for amusement and revenge, or else were the creations of his fears and imagination, this last was the most horrible. It appears that among those who were arrested and put to the torture, that he might learn more in regard to this last conspiracy, the wife of Colonel Hilario Marcó was arrested, and subjected to the usual ordeal. This Marcó, during the time of the elder Lopez, had been the chief of police at Asuncion, and was regarded at that time by the people of Asuncion generally as the worst man in Paraguay who was not a member of the Lopez family. He had married a niece of



General Barrios, the brother-in-law of Lopez ; and it was this woman who was put to the torture and bidden to confess what she knew in regard to the conspiracy. Of course, she could confess nothing, as probably there was no conspiracy, and consequently she could know nothing. But, when the pain became so severe that it could be no longer borne, she began by accusing the mother and sisters of Lopez, and his brother Venancio, as also her husband. When questioned further, she said the plan was to kill Lopez by putting poison in his food. The mother was immediately put in prison ; and the two sisters, who for some time had been at liberty, were again shut up in their carts.

When Lopez heard that his mother had been accused of conspiring with her daughters and her other son to murder him, he called together his principal officers and asked them if he ought not to bring his mother to trial. Resquin and all the others, with the exception of Aveiro, answered that it was better not to proceed formally to the trial of the old lady, at which Lopez became furious, and called them sycophants and flunkies, praising Aveiro highly for having said that his mother should be tried like any other criminal. He said that among them all Aveiro was his only friend. The trial was accordingly ordered. Marcó was flogged till he confirmed the confession of his wife, and until he also accused the old lady. From this time the poor old woman and her daughters were treated with such a degree of cruelty as would appear incredible were the evidence such as would admit of a doubt.\*

\* Lest it may be said that all the evidence of Lopez's atrocious treatment of his mother, sisters, and brothers is from Brazilian sources, and therefore not reliable, I give the following extracts from a letter received by me from Dr. Frederick Skinner, the English physician, who was surgeon-general of the Paraguayan Army after the capture of Dr. Stewart. It will be found to confirm the worst ever said against the tyrant by his bitterest enemy : —

“BUENOS AIRES, June 20, 1870.

“MY DEAR MR. WASHBURN, — You will doubtless be surprised to receive these few lines, but the remembrance of the many pleasant whist-parties of which I was a member, and of the many good dinners which I ate in the Plaza Vieja during our acquaintance in Paraguay, causes me to believe that you will be glad to hear



Lopez, as we have before seen, when he had any particular feeling of hatred for persons, was careful not to have them punished beyond the power of endurance. He desired them to live for the pleasure that their torture afforded him. For this object he kept his mother, his sisters, and his brother alive for a considerable time, and they were flogged most unmercifully as often as it could be done without danger of hastening their death. His brother Venancio had been in feeble health from the commencement of the war, and the sufferings he had undergone during the last year had so com-

from myself personally, having escaped alive and well after so many dangers and adventures. . . .

"I was taken prisoner on the 1st of March, when Lopez was killed, and was with him about three minutes before his death; and very thin and weak I was. The Brazilians set me free, as the Count d'Eu ascertained that I was one of the monster's victims, and not of his accomplices."

"Thank God, now that the war is over, and all the dreadful atrocities of the unparalleled brute Lopez cannot fail to be brought to light, your veracity and honor must be thoroughly established, and all your conduct vindicated. I was much grieved and disgusted at hearing them doubted in some papers, and attempts made to gloss over, or rather to deny, the fact of his being the very worst devil that ever polluted this earth. Who but he ever flogged his own mother and sisters, and killed his brothers, — one, after a mock trial, by bullet; the other, by starvation and flogging with a doubled lasso, a lance-thrust finishing the scene of torture when the victim could no longer move. Who else exterminated a whole people by starvation, while he, his mistress and bastards, passed a life of comfort, feasting, nay, drinking choice wine *ad libitum*, surrounded by every convenience attainable in a retreat from a pursuing army? More still, at the time of his death he had stores sufficient to have saved numbers, amongst them several cart-loads of salt, which his victims and followers had not tasted for months. I myself felt the want of it more than any other privation, much more so than short rations."

"I can hardly realize everything even now. I should much have liked to take a trip to Europe and the States when all was over; but my funds did not permit, as the only money which I have to compensate for nine years' service does not amount to much more than £——, and I must begin the world again, and think I cannot do better than return to Paraguay, as the new government will employ me, and the survivors of the war are grateful for my past services, and wish me to remain amongst them. . . .

"I should much like to see you again and talk over past time, but at any rate I trust you will write to me shortly, and I will certainly answer and give you the news of poor Paraguay. So with best regards to yourself and compliments to your lady,

"Believe me, yours faithfully,

"FREDERICK SKINNER."



pletely prostrated him that under the daily flogging with the double lasso which was applied to him he soon became so helpless that he could no longer walk, and his brother ordered him to be lanced. He was accordingly despatched, and buried by the wayside. After the battle of Pirébebui, it would appear, from the account of Doña Inocencia, that her mother and her sister Rafaela were both driven along like common prisoners. All the carts were engaged in transporting the provisions and valuables, including a large stock of wines, liquors, salt, and camp equipage for Lopez and Madam Lynch, and those children that a little before had lost their protector by the recall of the American Minister. In Doña Inocencia's account of their sufferings after the battle of Pirébebui, she says: "When we were ordered to march after the battle of Pirébebui, a soldier came and offered to carry for us the hides which we used as beds. Happily for us he did this, else we should all have perished of hunger, for along the march we used to scrape the hair off and roast the hide. This was our only food. On arriving at the place designated by Lopez, such was our awful condition that the girls, almost perfectly naked, had to wander through the woods, during the terrific heat, in search of a frog, or a snake, or any kind of insect to eat. The Calagua Indians at times would bring us a piece of meat of some unknown animal, or mandioca or maize, for which we gave them a gold ring, or some other valuable trinket. But our moral sufferings were even worse. How often have we seen a mother weeping over her unfortunate child expiring from famine!" But these terrible sufferings could not long endure. The Brazilians were all the while pressing hard after Lopez; and his troops that followed him in the rear, driving the starving women and children before them, were so often cut off by the allies that his army was fast melting away.



## CHAPTER XL.

Lopez's System of Warfare no longer practicable. — His Army melts away. — His Encampment on the Banks of the Aquidaban. — A Surprise. — Flight of Lopez. — Capture and Death of his Ministers and Principal Officers. — The Pursuit of Lopez. — His Death. — Flight and Capture of Madam Lynch. — Death of Pancho Lynch. — The Rescue of Lopez's Mother and Sisters. — Return to Asuncion. — Ruined Condition of the City. — The Havocs of the War. — Nine Tenths of the Population destroyed. — Desire of the Paraguayan Women to wreak their Vengeance on Madam Lynch. — She is protected from their Fury by the Brazilians. — Her Property sequestered. — The Fugitives in Asuncion. — Their Wretched Condition. — The Provisional Government. — Efforts to relieve the General Distress.

THE plan of organization adopted by Lopez early in the war, to compel his men to fight desperately and never surrender, had been completely successful so long as he could maintain his head-quarters in a central position and closely watch all his subordinates. This plan could only be made available among a people so thoroughly trained to obedience that they had become mere machines, that would go wherever ordered, though inevitable death should confront them. In everything, from long before the war began, it was "theirs not to make reply, theirs not to reason why," and when marshalled to battle the Paraguayan soldier understood that it must be "victory or death." They were sent into action in such a way that every man was responsible for the good conduct of at least five others. Every soldier, as he advanced to the attack, was aware that if he lagged or faltered, or should attempt to desert, his two comrades next him must shoot him on the instant, or, in turn, be shot themselves. The non-commissioned officer immediately over them was responsible for them all, and, should one of them escape, would either be flogged or shot when the battle was over. Then the captain,



lieutenant, or ensign, was responsible in turn for them all, and the higher officer in command must answer for every man under him. Desertion, therefore, was scarcely possible ; and as surrender to overpowering odds was always considered to be desertion, the men fought with desperation, knowing that their only chance of life was in victory. The greatest danger was always in the rear. The distrust was so universal, that though a squad or company were individually all anxious to desert or be captured, and were completely cut off from the main army, no one would dare to suggest surrender. They must all fight till they were killed, for if some were captured and others were not, the latter were certain to be most inhumanly flogged and then executed. In the early part of the war, the punishment for those who fought bravely themselves, but yet could not, or did not, prevent defection among others near them, was generally limited to flogging. Afterwards shooting was the rule for all delinquents of this kind except when a repulse was general, in which case the officers were shot and the men decimated.

This system was for a long time so effective that nearly the whole male population of the country was sacrificed, and caused the outer world, which knew nothing of it, to wonder at the courage and endurance of the Paraguayans, who, it was believed, were fighting, with a valor never surpassed, for liberty and independence, under an heroic leader. But after Lopez had been driven into the mountains he could no longer maintain his system in perfection. To drive before him so many thousands of the helpless, starving women and children he was obliged to send out a great many small parties to force along those who could walk, and to kill all who if left behind might be taken prisoners. In this practice it was inevitable that many stragglers should be captured, and Lopez, in retreating through the cordilleras, found his forces fast diminishing, even though no battles were fought. He had reached a place called Cerro Cora, on the banks of the Aquidaban, with only about twelve hundred men, and had there made a halt. The position selected for this last encampment was favorable



to his plans, as it was approachable on the side liable to attack only through a narrow opening, and had a way of escape in the rear, in case his little band could not hold the pass in front. On this, as on all previous occasions, Lopez intended to make sure of a way of escape for himself in the event of defeat at the entrance of the pass.

Through all the long marches, from the time he had left Cerro Leon, one of his constant cares had been to provide that in no contingency should the means be wanting for supplying his own table in a manner that fighting generals would scorn to maintain. During the latter part of the retreat, nearly all the carts and oxen left to him were employed in transporting his elegant camp equipage, and provisions, wines, and liquors that were intended only for the use of himself and Madam Lynch, and their joint progeny. Lopez seemed to the last to indulge in the hope that he would be able to get so far into the forest that the Brazilians would give up the pursuit, and that then, as a sort of cacique among the native Indians, he might continue for years to play the part of a despot, and be such a pest on the borders of civilization as to figure in the newspapers of other countries. He even made a treaty with some chiefs of the miserable tribes of that region, by which they were to furnish him with provisions for his army for the period of seven years. Copies of these treaties he contrived to get published by having them fall into the hands of the Brazilians, and they were then republished by his faithful agents in Europe and the United States, to prove that he was still invincible, and that it was the duty of foreign powers to interfere and put an end to the war. To provide for such a life, he always had a large quantity of salt carried along in the advanced train with his personal baggage. All around him, even his staff, were denied this luxury; and from witnessing the suffering that the want of it had caused in his army, he seemed more in dread of being deprived of it himself than of anything else. Hence it was guarded with the greatest care, and neither his mother nor his sisters were allowed a grain of it, nor of any of the other luxuries that were still abundant with



him when he was overtaken and killed. They were kept nearly at the point of starvation, but so far removed from it that they should not die and thus deprive him of the delight of torturing them.

In this fastness on the banks of the Aquidaban Lopez had halted, not knowing how near the Brazilians were in pursuit. The pickets and reconnoitring parties, worn down by incessant watching and toil, were either killed or so demoralized as to desert, and failed to report the proximity of the enemy. The Brazilians, therefore, were close upon him, while he was yet resting at his ease, in the belief that they were several leagues distant. The main army of the pursuers had almost reached the pass which guarded the entrance to Lopez's headquarters, when a call was made for reinforcements from a reconnoitring party. The Brazilian general, José Antonio Correa da Camarra, ordered an instant advance of the whole infantry force at his disposal. But the power of Lopez had already departed. The little force left to guard the pass would not obey the standing order to fight against any odds till all were killed. At the sight of the Brazilians they broke, some to surrender, some to hide themselves in the woods, and a few to fly to head-quarters and give the alarm.

Lopez, when he heard that the pass had been forced by the Brazilians, gave instant orders to form in order of battle and keep back the invaders, while he mounted his horse, which was always kept ready for such an emergency, and ran away. The carriage of Madam Lynch was also at hand, ready for flight; and she had just time to gather her children into it and summon a small escort under the command of her eldest son, Pancho, a youth of about seventeen, and dash off in another direction from that taken by Lopez, when the Brazilians rushed in to find no one to oppose them. They pushed on after the fugitives, and in the pursuit the old Vice-President, Sanchez, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the much-detested Caminos, were killed. Resquin attempted to follow the carriage of Madam Lynch, but seeing that escape was impossible, he turned to his pursuers, and, throwing away his



sword, proclaimed himself a *pasado* (deserter), and was taken prisoner. Aveiro, and some others, followed his example. Lopez, being better mounted than any of his followers, had succeeded in gaining the woods, and was making off with all his might, apparently trusting to that fortune which had so often saved him in previous cowardly flights. But the ground over which he made his way was so soft and treacherous that his horse floundered, and almost stuck fast in the mire. Dismounting, the hunted chieftain made his way to the bank of the river, the Brazilians, among whom was General Camarra, being close in pursuit. The Aquidaban at this season was but a broad marshy brook, and Lopez had succeeded in wading across it, and had just reached the farther bank, when General Camarra came upon him. Seeing that it was Lopez, Camarra called out to his soldiers, who were rushing forward to finish him, to disarm and not to kill him. A soldier called Chico Diablo (Little Devil) sprang forward to obey the order, when seeing that Lopez had drawn his revolver, and was raising it to shoot the man who had just ordered his life to be spared, he made a thrust at him with a lance, at which the tyrant fell headforemost into the muddy stream. But he instantly attempted to scramble up, and was upon his knees, when he was hit by a shot from an unknown hand, and fell again in the mud, and there expired.

General Camarra, seeing Lopez fall, came up, and, being satisfied that it was indeed he, ordered his men to pull him out of the mud and carry him back to his late head-quarters.

As soon as the Paraguayans knew that Lopez was dead, they set up a shout of joy. It was necessary to post sentinels around his hated corpse to prevent the women who had gathered round from tearing him to pieces. Could they have got at him, their hatred of him was so intense they would have cut him into mince-meat; and, of all who now cursed him, those who had been the most ready, the most zealous, apparently, in executing the cruel orders of Lopez in torturing and killing his subjects, were loudest in denouncing and execrating him as a monster and wretch that had held



them spell-bound, and had forced them to commit acts against which their souls revolted.

Madam Lynch, who, on seeing the approach of the Brazilians, had fled with her children in a coach, with a small escort under command of her son Pancho, was soon overtaken by a party of Brazilians, and young Lynch was told to surrender. The officer in command approached, and as he turned to give an order for Pancho to be disarmed the youth made a treacherous thrust and slightly wounded him, at which a Brazilian soldier ran him through with a lance. Madam Lynch was then taken, with her other children, to the place where the corpse of Lopez was lying. A guard was also found necessary to protect her, as the Paraguayan women, had they been permitted, would undoubtedly have dug out her eyes with bodkins, stripped her of the elegant silks and rich jewels which she still wore, and thrust her mutilated body into the Aquidaban, to become food for the alligators.

The mother and sisters of Lopez were also taken prisoners; but there was no disposition on the part of the Paraguayan people to insult or injure them. They had been their fellow-sufferers, and with them shared the general joy that the tyrant was dead. They were brought to view the dead body of the author of all their miseries. At beholding him, the old lady could not restrain herself from a flood of tears. The sight of him, her first-born, on whom she had built so many hopes, and who had inflicted so much misery on his country, until but a remnant of its people was left, who had killed his two brothers and his brothers-in-law, and whipped and starved his sisters, and had not spared even his own mother, whose back and shoulders at that time were covered with fresh scars caused by the blows of the double lasso inflicted by his order, was certainly enough to cause an outburst of tears of mingled joy and maternal affection. The sisters, however, looked unmoved upon the carcass, and Doña Rafaela, turning to her mother, said, "Mother, why do you weep? He was no son, no brother; he was a monster." They then turned away, and for the first time for many



months they received treatment which might be called human. Lopez was then rudely buried ; and as the war was over, as the last and the only enemy against whom the allies had made war was dead, nothing more was to be done but to gather up the scattered forces and return to Asuncion. Madam Lynch requested permission from General Camarra to give Lopez a more decent burial ; the request was granted, and she and her surviving children accordingly dug a grave, in which Lopez and young Pancho were buried. Orders were then given for them to prepare to march for Concepcion, as this was the nearest town on the banks of the river where they could meet steamers to convey them to Asuncion.

On arriving at the old capital, the mother and sisters of Lopez were permitted to go on shore, where for a while they were held under surveillance, but were afterwards allowed to occupy one of their own houses, and to recover from the prostration caused by their terrible and long-protracted suffering. Madam Lynch, however, was detained as prisoner on board the Brazilian gunboat.

On the occupation of Asuncion, a year before, by the allies, a provisional government had been established, having respect, in form at least, to the terms of the Triple Alliance. The members of this new government, or junta, were all native Paraguayans, and all but one were persons who, at the commencement of the war, were not in Paraguay. During the time of the elder Lopez a considerable number of Paraguayans had been exiled from the country ; or rather, having left by the President's permission, had never returned ; and a few who had left between his death and the commencement of the war, ostensibly intending to return, had remained outside of Paraguay. These, with the prisoners of war and deserters that from time to time had passed over to the allies, constituted almost the entire male population of Paraguay. At the time of Lopez's death, his army probably contained less than a thousand soldiers. At the commencement of the war, it is estimated that there were about eight hundred thousand people in the country, of whom it is supposed that four



hundred and fifty thousand were females. Of the remaining three hundred and fifty thousand males all had perished, save those who had been taken prisoners and those boys under eight or nine years of age who were too young to have been made useful for any service in the army. During the war more women than men perished, notwithstanding that, at the death of Lopez, there were seven women to one man left alive. According to the estimate of Messrs. Burrill and Valpy, who were taken prisoners about the time of the battle of Pirébeui, one hundred and twenty thousand women and children had died of starvation and exposure from the time of the battle of Pikysyry to their own escape. After this the mortality increased, and so many perished, that, when the war was ended, it is probable that of the four hundred and fifty thousand females in Paraguay at the commencement of the war not sixty thousand were left alive. Of the males, including the boys under ten years of age, there were not twenty thousand. Of full-grown men capable of bearing arms, there could not have been ten thousand ; so that, after this terrible war, there was left alive, of the whole Paraguayan nation, but one tenth of its population. All had been sacrificed to the ambition, the folly, and the cruelty of Lopez and Madam Lynch. More than seven hundred thousand Paraguayans had perished, and probably the war had cost the allies three hundred thousand lives ; so that the unnatural tyrant, during the seven years of his power, was the immediate and direct cause of the death of a million of people. But he had accomplished his purpose. His threat that, if he could not come out of the war triumphant, he would leave his country an uninhabited desert waste, had been fulfilled. He had inflicted on it and its people all the misery that a selfish, weak, and wicked man could do, and left a name to be abhorred wherever the story of his crimes should be known.

The Paraguayans who had escaped and were in Asuncion at the time that Madam Lynch was brought there a prisoner were exceedingly anxious for an opportunity to wreak their



vengeance upon her; and the provisional government made the request that she should be delivered to it, in order to be tried by the Paraguayan tribunals. This was refused by the Brazilian authorities; and a petition was drawn up and signed by a large number of the surviving Paraguayan women, in which they set forth the wrongs which they had suffered at her hands, and stated that they had been forced to give up their money and their jewels, under the pretence that they were for the defence of their country, when they knew they had not been expended for any such purpose, but had been wrested from them for the benefit of Madam Lynch and the offspring of the tyrant, who, besides having thus robbed them, had murdered their husbands, brothers, fathers, and sons; and they begged that she might not be permitted to leave the country and carry away the property of which they had been thus robbed to spend in other countries.

For a year previous to the evacuation of Asuncion in February, 1868, Madam Lynch, foreseeing that Lopez must finally be overthrown, had been engaged in buying up a large part of the most valuable property in Asuncion. The people who owned it had no alternative, when she offered to purchase it, but to accept her terms. She invariably paid in the paper money of the country, which would be of little, if any, value should Lopez be overthrown, and of which she had an unlimited supply by order of her paramour. When she made an offer for a house or other building, the owner dared not refuse it, for he knew she had both the power and the will to punish him for a refusal; and hence all those bargains were in fact nothing more than a confiscation of the property for the benefit of Madam Lynch, for which in turn she gave them, in charity, just what she pleased. Under these circumstances, it could not be otherwise than that the new government should declare sequestrated all the property held in her name in Paraguay; and both government and people tried very hard to find out what had become of the money and jewels that had been stolen, and to get possession of them. But she had prudently taken care, long before, that such things should



be placed where the rightful owners could not in any contingency regain them.

Asuncion by this time had become, as it were, a mass of ruins. It had been abandoned nearly a year and a half before it was captured by the Brazilians ; and in that time many of the poorer houses had been completely destroyed by the frequent rains, and many of the better class had suffered so from neglect as to be scarcely habitable. After being captured by the Brazilians, whose habits are notoriously slovenly and unclean, its condition was much worse, for little pains was taken to preserve order and cleanliness ; and to the havoc made by the weather was added that of the soldiers, who did not care what damages they caused. But the most melancholy spectacle was that presented by the Paraguayan women, who, having escaped from Lopez, had come to the old capital in hopes of obtaining food. These were mere skeletons, and were so exhausted and miserable that on reaching the capital they could hardly walk. They were generally without any clothing whatever ; and women who had once been considered among the most respectable in the country would come dragging their weary, emaciated limbs into the town in a state of perfect nudity, and walk through the streets without the least sense of shame or modesty. This fact, perhaps, is stronger proof than any other that can be adduced of the terrible sufferings that these people had endured. It is known, that among the lowest and most brutal savages, as low as the Guaicurus or the Guatos of the Upper Paraguay, or the Bushmen of Australia, a certain modesty is the instinct of the female. No matter how low, how base, how brutal, the women always seek to cover their persons ; but these Paraguayan women who escaped from the army of Lopez and came into Asuncion had, many of them, not a trace of this feeling left. They had been driven before the brutal soldiery so long, through the woods and over the mountains, with nothing to eat but wild fruit and such small animals as they could catch, many of which were repulsive even to the sight, beaten with sticks, and certain to



be lanced to death if they lingered behind, their scanty clothing at last all torn from them, with the dead and dying around them, with scarcely a vestige of hope left to them, that they in time became indifferent to everything like decency or modesty ; and when they came straggling into Asuncion, their very appearance told the whole story of the miseries which they had endured.

When once assured that they were beyond the reach of Lopez, their first impulse was to go to the capital ; and so many thousands of them coming in together, there was, of course, the greatest destitution after they reached there. Many of them were so exhausted and reduced on arriving there, that only the best of treatment, with good medical skill, could restore them. It was impossible that adequate provision should be made for so many ; and among soldiers like the Brazilians and the Argentine gauchos it was not likely they would be treated with either kindness or pity. The provisional government, and indeed the military commanders, endeavored to alleviate their sufferings ; yet as scarcely anything eatable had been produced in the country for a long time previously, all the provisions necessary, not only for the army, but for this multitude of fugitives, must be brought from the mouth of the river. No adequate provision having been made for such an increased number, the allies could not, if they had been disposed to, have provided for so many as applied to them for relief. This, perhaps, to a certain extent, was an inevitable consequence of such a war ; but it cannot be denied that for a long time the conquerors did not exert themselves as they should have done to mitigate the sufferings of the unhappy women and children who appealed to them for relief. Yet it should be said for them, that whenever any foreigners fell into their hands they treated them with the greatest kindness. I have myself received numerous letters from those who escaped by being taken prisoners, subsequent to my departure from Paraguay, and they invariably testify to the kindness and good treatment which they received from the hands of the Brazilians. I have also seen the published statements of



others, and, with a single exception, they all speak in the warmest terms of gratitude of their deliverers, and note the date of their escape from the power of Lopez as the termination of their sufferings. Though weak and debilitated by what they had before endured, yet the hope which had been revived by their rescue rendered the period of their subsequent trials a time of comparative ease and joy.



## CHAPTER XLI.

The Surviving Companions of Lopez unable to explain his Conduct. — He left no Evidence against his Victims. — His most trusted Officers alarmed for their own Safety. — Bewildered by a Phantom. — His Charge against Don Benigno. — Lopez, dying, left no Friend to mourn him. — His Name universally accursed. — The Character of Lopez not to be judged by any Human Standard. — A Mental and Moral Deformity. — Likeness and Unlikeness to Francia. — His Treatment of his Family. — The Curse of Solomon. — The Future of Paraguay. — The Immigration needed. — Advantages which the Country offers. — The Present Government. — Conclusion.

THE expectation which had been cherished by many, and particularly by those inclined to judge more leniently of the character of Lopez than the unexplained record of his acts would warrant, that after his death facts would be disclosed which would in some degree palliate his conduct, was not realized. It was believed that if any of those immediately around him, and with whom his relations were supposed to be somewhat intimate and confidential, should escape or survive their chief, they would reveal the motive of his strange and unnatural conduct. But although several of these were taken prisoners they had nothing to disclose. They could tell of nothing more than that they were in as great a mystery as the thousands of victims who had been executed for taking part in a conspiracy of whose existence they had never heard until they were arrested and by torture forced to confess their complicity in it. Resquin who had ordered, and Aveiro who had applied, the torture in thousands of instances, and had witnessed with apparent pleasure the contortions of the victims, were no sooner aware that their terrible master was dead than they became his accusers, and declared that they had been but unwilling instruments to



enforce his horrible orders. They protested that for years they had been in constant danger, and were liable at any moment to be arrested and subjected to the treatment they were obliged to inflict on others of whose innocence they were fully convinced. But of the different conspiracies for which so many were made to suffer they knew nothing. It was not supposed that Aveiro had ever been admitted into the counsels of his master, as he was nothing but an evil-looking wretch, selected for the most revolting work of the tyrant solely on account of his brutality. Resquin was for years the most trusted of all Lopez's lieutenants in executive matters, and it had been through him that the tyrant's most sanguinary orders had been promulgated. But his long statement, published in the newspapers of Buenos Aires not long after the death of Lopez, throws no light on the most mysterious parts of the long tragedy. In regard to the great conspiracy, he says he knew nothing beyond what Lopez told him. He had no evidence of it except the confessions of tortured witnesses. Lopez, in explanation of the many arrests which he ordered, told him at one time that Don Benigno had planned a revolution, and to assassinate his brother, the President, with a knife; that an ensign had revealed the plot. How the ensign found out the secret intentions of Benigno was not related. Lopez also told Resquin that Benigno, Bedoya, and others had robbed the treasury to reward their accomplices (of whom, I suppose, I was chief) in the conspiracy; and that Benigno had sent a map of the Paraguayan positions to Caxias, and two chests of gold. How this gold was sent does not appear, as all this time there was no communication through the military lines; of course, Resquin must have known that there was no truth in the statement, and that Lopez knew there was not at the time he made it. Resquin also knew that any question showing incredulity would be but a prelude to the arrest and execution of the doubter.

The circumstance that caused us so much surprise at the Legation in Asuncion, when we learned of the arrest of



Benitez, Fernandez, Venancio Lopez, and others who, we supposed, were still in favor, and who had just before been engaged in arresting scores of others and sending them to head-quarters, also caused great alarm among all the higher officers of the army, including Resquin himself. They could not understand how Venancio and Fernandez, if they were leaders in a conspiracy, should implicitly obey the orders of Lopez to arrest all their accomplices and send them to his presence. Why, if there were a conspiracy of which they were members, did they not try to escape, instead of arresting their accomplices and sending them in irons to head-quarters, and then waiting their own turn for arrest and execution. The fact that they did not attempt to do so was conclusive evidence that they were as much in the dark as to the cause of the strange proceedings that were passing around them as was everybody at head-quarters except Lopez, and perhaps Madam Lynch. If Lopez were killing off so many of those lately in high favor from a cowardly fear ; if, dreading imaginary dangers, he was slaying right and left his most servile followers and instruments, — then indeed might Resquin, Aveiro, and even Madam Lynch, fear for their own safety, and endeavor to prove their loyalty and devotion by greater zeal in accusing others.

From this testimony of Resquin, it appears that Lopez throughout, like his prototype Francia, kept his own counsels ; and though it would seem from many things which he did that he believed at times that there really had been some kind of a scheme or plot devised against him, the inference to be drawn from a review of his whole conduct is that his distempered imagination had conjured up a phantom which at times he believed to be a reality ; that he cherished this belief, as it furnished a reason or pretext to his own mind for indulging in his favorite pastime of inflicting pain and torture on others.

And yet it is possible that Benigno, who was an intriguing, ambitious, and avaricious man, had devised a scheme with one or two of his most intimate friends by which he hoped to



obtain the succession, in case his brother should be overthrown. But this is only a surmise, and has no other foundation than that the conduct of his brother towards him can be explained in no other way. But as we know that Lopez tortured and executed hundreds or thousands of innocent persons for no offence whatever, the inference drawn from his own unnatural conduct can hardly be said to afford a shadow of evidence to favor this surmise.

Previous to the death of Lopez, history furnishes no example of a tyrant so despicable and cruel that at his fall he left no friend among his own people ; no apologist or defender, no follower or participant of his infamies, to utter one word in palliation of his crimes ; no one to regret his death, or who cherished the least spark of love for his person or his memory ; no one to utter a prayer for the repose of his soul. In this respect, Lopez had surpassed all tyrants who ever lived. No sooner was he dead, than all alike, the officer high in command, the subaltern who applied the torture, the soldier who passively obeyed, the mother who bore him, and the sisters who once loved him, all joined in denouncing him as an unparalleled monster ; and of the whole Paraguayan nation there is perhaps not one of the survivors who does not curse his name, and ascribe to his folly, selfishness, ambition, and cruelty all the evils that his unhappy country has suffered. Not a family remains which does not charge him with having destroyed the larger part of its members and reduced the survivors to misery and want. Of all those who were within reach of his death-dealing hand during the last years of his power, there are but two persons living to say a word in mitigation of the judgment pronounced against him by his countrymen and countrywomen.

In concluding, it might be expected that an attempt would be made to give a general summary or estimate of the character of Lopez. But this can only be done by a recital of his acts, as he did not seem to be governed by the ordinary motives which influence mankind. He committed so many acts of an atrocious



character, without any object, so far as those around him could discover, that he is not to be judged by the same standard as other men. He was a mental and moral deformity, a monster; and it is therefore idle to attempt to analyze or estimate his character as a reasoning being subject to the passions, impulses, and motives that are supposed to inspire all members of the human family. Destitute of the ordinary feelings of humanity, he was uninfluenced by the motives which govern the generality of mankind. He was an exception, *sui generis*. He was as different from other men as had been Francia, but in another way. Francia had no natural affection. He sent a curse as his last message to his father, and gave no thought to his natural children, who wandered destitute through the streets of Asuncion. The character of Lopez is redeemed by the fact that he did have a regard for his natural children; but that regard was of so perverted a nature that it prompted many of his most atrocious acts. It was to enrich these children that he robbed so many thousands of people, whom he afterwards executed, that they might never again claim their own. But his treatment of his parents was infinitely worse than that of Francia, of whom Carlyle says, "If he could not forgive his dying father at such a time, may God never forgive him!" The curse of Francia was but the ebullition of ill-temper; but the whole career of Lopez, from the time of the death of his predecessor, who, though not his father, had always been as a father to him, was one compared with which the brutal message of Francia was but an idle exclamation. As we have seen, no sooner had the breath left the body of Carlos Antonio Lopez than his most intimate friends, his counsellors and advisers, and all to whom he had shown any attachment, or in whom he had placed any confidence, were immediately arrested; and the most of them, after long imprisonment, during which they were subjected to the most cruel treatment and protracted tortures, either died or were put to death; throughout the latter part of his career, he derided the counsels and refused the petitions and prayers of his



mother. Upon his younger brother and the husbands of his two sisters he inflicted the most exquisite and intense misery, and finally put them to death. His elder brother he drove before him like a fettered wild beast into the mountains, and caused him to be flogged daily, until he was about to die, when he ordered him to be despatched by a lance. His sisters and mother were subjected to the same treatment, except that they had not been executed at the time the unnatural monster was killed ; but he had previously given orders that neither of them should under any contingency of battle escape. He had instructed the jailers of his sisters, that both of them should be given fifty blows a day until they expired ; and he had already signed an order for the execution of his mother, when the Brazilians unexpectedly broke in upon him and put an end to his terrible career. Early in his administration, the strange antipathy and animosity which he seemed to have for all the old friends of his parents was the subject of remark among those foreigners who could talk among themselves without fear of having their conversation reported to the police ; and more than once were these words quoted as foreshadowing his miserable end : " The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." Lopez, from the outset of his career as President, was inviting this curse upon himself. He fell in the mud of the Aquidaban, and was buried upon its banks with so slight a covering of earth that it is more than probable that the curse pronounced by Solomon for filial disrespect and disobedience has been literally fulfilled.

The future of Paraguay must depend entirely on the extent and character of the immigrants who may come to repopulate its waste places. The nation, with its peculiar civilization, is destroyed. The Paraguayan people no longer exist in numbers sufficient to control the destinies of the country ; and of the native population remaining there are perhaps seven women to one man. This inequality of the sexes is diminished to a considerable extent by the numerous camp-followers and



deserters from the allied armies, who were left there when the troops were withdrawn, and who will probably remain there in large numbers, to be a pest and a hindrance to the redemption and development of the country. Should there be a large immigration from Central and Northern Europe of people educated to respect and enforce the laws, Paraguay may soon become the paradise of South America. The greatest danger now is, that the gauchos from the Argentine provinces will flock in there, and possess themselves of the fine plains and fertile valleys in such numbers as to render the lives and property of the industrious and law-abiding settlers insecure. To guard against this, those who would emigrate to Paraguay should, under the present circumstances, go in colonies, and in such numbers as to give mutual protection. They should imitate the example of the emigrants from Europe to the United States, and regard Paraguay as their permanent home, assuming as early as possible the duties and responsibilities of citizens. They should avoid the errors of their countrymen in the lower countries of the Plata, who have left all political matters to the revolutionary gauchos, and thus exposed themselves to incessant revolutions and civil wars. The country itself offers inducements to the emigrants from the Old World greater than any other part of South America, if not of the world. Thousands of the abandoned houses can at slight expense be made comfortable habitations, and the fields, once cultivated but more recently neglected, would again yield, with little labor, ample supplies of food for a large population ; and the countless acres of as yet unbroken greensward only await the plough and the husbandman to yield magnificent harvests of Indian corn, cotton, tobacco, and sugar-cane. The woods promise immense profits to the capitalist who will erect saw-mills and export the lumber ; the plains are capable of supporting vast herds of cattle throughout the year, subjecting their owners to no other expense but to mark them and guard them from straying. It is now for the government that has succeeded to the destroying tyranny which has been overthrown to pursue a policy that shall bring in such people from



other countries as will appreciate the great advantages that the country offers. If the newly established authorities shall be wise enough to imitate the example of the United States, and dispose of the lands belonging to the state in small tracts at a nominal price to those who will occupy and cultivate them for a given number of years ; if it shall firmly repress the spirit of gauchoism and revolution so that life and property may be secure, — there is no reason why this land, so favored by nature, should not soon become the garden of the earth.







## A P P E N D I X.

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### CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN REAR-ADMIRAL DAVIS AND PRESIDENT LOPEZ.

#### *Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.*

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate,)  
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 3, 1868.

SIR, — I have the honor to inform your Excellency that I have arrived in front of Angostura, having on board his Excellency General M. T. McMahon, the Minister of the United States to the Republic of Paraguay.

As an indispensable preliminary step to the presentation, by General McMahon to your Excellency, of his credential letters, I have to request that Messrs. Bliss and Masterman, the persons arrested and detained in Asuncion while under the protection and attached to the Legation of the previous United States Minister, be restored to the authority of the United States flag.

Knowing that before the occurrence of this arrest and detention it was the earnest desire of the government of the United States to continue, under the existing circumstances, its friendly relations with the Republic of Paraguay, — a desire sufficiently manifested by the prompt appointment of General McMahon, — it is my hope that your Excellency will hasten to remove the only obstacle which stands in the way of these relations.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States  
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,  
*President of the Republic of Paraguay.*



*Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.*

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate,)  
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 4, 1868.

SIR, — I have the honor to apprise your Excellency of my arrival in front of the batteries of Angostura.

My object in placing myself in personal intercourse with your Excellency is to request that M<sup>essrs</sup>. Bliss and Masterman, the individuals arrested and detained in Asuncion on the 10th day of September last, may be delivered into my keeping, subject to the order of the government of the United States.

It does not belong to me to define, or even to consider, the status of these individuals.

But on this subject your Excellency will, I do not doubt, repose confidence in the justice and friendship of the United States, which has afforded your Excellency many recent proofs of its respect and sympathy.

Any papers your Excellency may be pleased to send with these individuals will be transmitted to Washington by the earliest opportunity.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States  
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,  
*President of the Republic of Paraguay.*

*Secretary Palacios to Rear-Admiral Davis.*

HEAD-QUARTERS AT PIKYSRY, December 5, 1868.

ADMIRAL, — I have the honor to inform your Excellency of the receipt of the note which you have been pleased to address, under date of yesterday, to his Excellency the Marshal, President of the Republic, by whose order I now reply to your Excellency.

The Paraguayan government, always influenced by the best and most friendly sentiments towards the United States of America, would gladly avail itself of every opportunity in which, without receding from its sovereignty and its rights, it could offer fresh proofs of its constant friendship; but his Excellency the President



regrets that it is not in his power to accede to the delivery, in the terms of your Excellency's note, of the accused Bliss and Masterman to the keeping of your Excellency, who, if not called upon to define, or even to consider, should not at least conceal from yourself the fact of their being criminals, deeply committed in the affair of a horrible conspiracy, very particularly the former. Nevertheless, his Excellency the President of the Republic would cheerfully consent to the delivery of the criminals Bliss and Masterman, provided it were requested in a manner more in conformity with the fact of their being accomplices of Mr. Washburn, and the first intimately acquainted with his intrigues in the character of conspirator and agent of the enemy, of which he is now accused in the national tribunals, since they could be useful in the administration of justice by the American government, to whose judgment he would confide the above-mentioned criminals.

I avail myself of this opportunity to assure your Excellency of my very distinguished consideration.

JUAN MANUEL PALACIOS,  
*Chief Military Secretary.*

HIS EXCELLENCY REAR-ADMIRAL C. H. DAVIS, *Commanding the  
Naval Forces of the United States in the South Atlantic.*

*Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.*

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate.)  
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 5, 1868.

SIR, — I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a communication from your Excellency, in reply to my communication of the 4th instant, in which your Excellency expresses a willingness to deliver to the United States government, in my keeping, the accused persons, Bliss and Masterman, mentioned in the said note, but that your Excellency objects to their delivery under the terms of my note.

I wish your Excellency to believe that it is no part of my official duty either to offer or to refuse any terms which will affect the alleged criminal condition of the two persons in question. The papers accompanying these two persons will sufficiently express to the government of the United States the judgment of the government of Paraguay in their cases.

I take this occasion to inform your Excellency that I am accom-



panied by a Minister accredited to the government of Paraguay, who, should no difficulties exist to prevent it, will present his credentials. Considering this and the friendship of the government of the United States of America for that of the Republic of Paraguay, I have to ask your Excellency to embark the accused persons, Bliss and Masterman, on board of this vessel, in order that I may keep them in security, subject to the disposition of the government of the United States, of whose justice and friendly sentiments your Excellency can entertain no doubt. Your Excellency is aware that the present position of this vessel is one in which she should not be detained longer than is absolutely necessary. Will your Excellency, therefore, be pleased to inform me when I may expect to receive these persons on board, or to apprise me at the earliest moment that it is not your Excellency's intention to send them at all, if such should be your final decision.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States  
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,  
*President of the Republic of Paraguay.*

*Secretary Palacios to Rear-Admiral Davis.*

HEAD-QUARTERS, PIKYSYRY, December 6, 1868.

ADMIRAL, — His Excellency the Marshal President of the Republic directs me to reply to the communication of yesterday's date, which he has just received from your Excellency, in answer to a communication of mine of the same day, written also by his Excellency's command.

As to what is said of the form of your Excellency's application for the embarkation of the criminals Bliss and Masterman, that it never intended either to offer or refuse terms which might affect the criminal condition of the individuals in question, but to leave it well established that this application could not be complied with in the sense of a reclamation, but of a graceful courtesy on the part of the government of Paraguay towards that of the United States of America; if in my answer your Excellency could find anything different, I beg pardon.



Your Excellency will now permit me to remark that I have written nothing in that communication which authorizes your Excellency to believe that it has ever been the intention of his Excellency the President of the Republic not to deliver up the criminals Bliss and Masterman unreservedly.

I thought that I had made it distinctly apparent that his Excellency regretted that it was not in his power to accede to the conditions of the first demand ; but since neither a reclamation nor a demand is in question, thus strengthening my former communications, his Excellency has given the necessary orders for the delivery of the criminals in a conspiracy, Bliss and Masterman, on board of your Excellency's vessel, that they may be securely retained, subject to the disposition of the government of the United States of America, asking permission to recommend to your Excellency their entire non-intercourse with the belligerent countries in whose service the conspiracy was set on foot.

Your Excellency will consider this application sufficiently justified by the actual state of the war, which has also led your Excellency to request that you should not be detained longer than is absolutely necessary.

In this respect I am happy to inform your Excellency that the prosecuting officers who have received the orders of his Excellency, with a recommendation to be brief, expect to get through in time for the embarkation of the criminals, Bliss and Masterman, by three o'clock of the afternoon of the 8th instant ; and at the same time they have expressed a wish, which they hope will be gratified, that your Excellency will name one or two of your officers who can witness, on the morning of the same day, the verification of the declarations of both of the accused in the case.

His Excellency the President thanks your Excellency for the information that you are accompanied by a Minister accredited to this Republic, the presentation of whose credentials the Minister will be pleased to arrange at his convenience in the customary form.

I profit by the occasion to offer to your Excellency the assurance of my very distinguished consideration.

JUAN MANUEL PALACIOS,  
*Chief Military Secretary.*

HIS EXCELLENCY REAR-ADMIRAL C. H. DAVIS, *commanding the  
Naval Forces of the United States in the South Atlantic.*



*Rear-Admiral Davis to President Lopez.*

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP WASP, (fourth-rate,)  
In front of Angostura, Paraguay, December 7, 1867.

SIR, — I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 6th instant.

In obedience to your Excellency's wishes I shall appoint two superior officers, one of them the chief of my staff, to witness the verification of the declarations of the accused, Bliss and Masterman ; and I shall be ready to receive the accused on board of my flag-ship at the time appointed by your Excellency.

These officers will be at your Excellency's command on the morning of the 8th instant.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

C. H. DAVIS,

*Rear-Admiral commanding the Naval Forces of the United States  
in the South Atlantic.*

HIS EXCELLENCY MARSHAL DON FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ,  
*President of the Republic of Paraguay.*



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